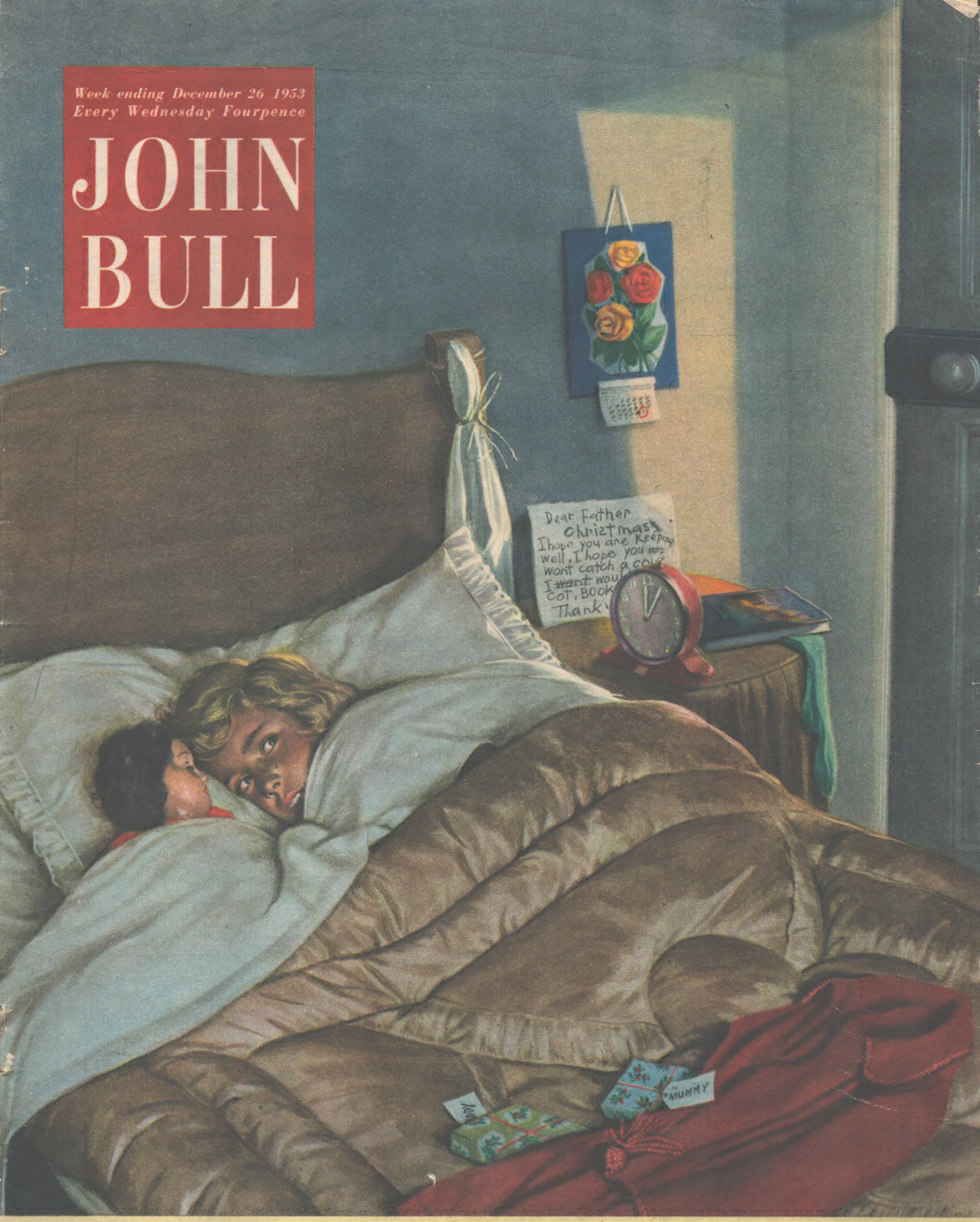
Week ending December 26 1953
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL



The Man From The Turkish Slave by **VICTOR CANNING** | **DETECTIVES IN KHAKI**

INDIGESTION?

When the cause is surplus stomach acid the remedy is Rennies

ALWAYS KEEP A PACKET OF RENNIES IN THE HOME

Each tablet is individually wrapped, which means you can always have two or three in your pocket or purse so as to be indigestion-free when eating out.

Pain after meals is not so much caused by the food you eat, as by the excess of stomach acid that food has produced. Rennies will neutralise this surplus stomach acid. The pain will disappear and the digestion will return to normal. Thus, foods you like but are afraid to eat can be enjoyed without the risk of after-meal agony. Rennies taken immediately after food stop the pain, before it starts, safely and quickly. If Rennies don't relieve your indigestion, it's high time you saw a doctor. Rennies are available everywhere at 2/8d., 1/6d. and 9½d.

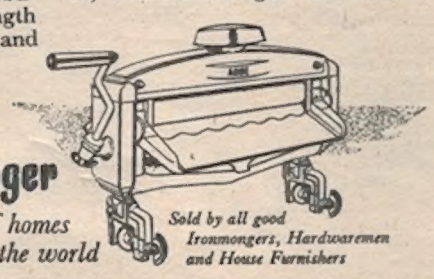
DIGESTIF **RENNIES**

NEUTRALISE SURPLUS STOMACH ACID

A blanket is as young as it feels and looks. No matter what its age, if it's still soft, fluffy and warm, it's a young blanket. So if you want your blankets—and everything else—to keep their life and freshness for years to come, then the answer is the ACME Cleanser-Wringer.

* * * *

It's the scientific combination of Pressure Distribution and Pressure Indication that does the trick! Acme pressure distribution operates over the whole length of the resilient rubber rollers and wrings the thin as well as the thick parts of the wash, expelling embedded dirt along with the surplus water . . . while Acme's new 3-point pressure indication takes the guesswork out of wringing. Everything from a bib to a blanket, gets exactly the right pressure suited to its weight and texture without any strain on delicate fibres. The whole wash—silks, cottons, linens, woollens—comes out fresher, cleaner, and with longer life ahead.



ACME

the cleanser-wringer

Used in millions of homes throughout the world

Sold by all good Ironmongers, Hardwaremen and House Furnishers

ACME WRINGERS LIMITED, DAVID STREET, GLASGOW, S.E.

Is irritability due to fatigue?

. . . or just bad temper?

Have you, too, been getting snappy lately? Do you fly off the handle easily? If so, what has come over your old sunny self? *If your irritability is accompanied by a constant feeling of fatigue* it is often a sign of a form of starvation you might never suspect.

VITAMIN-STARVATION ON THREE SQUARE MEALS A DAY!

Irritability, depression and undue fatigue are often due to an unsuspected vitamin-shortage. This can even happen to people who enjoy their three square meals a day. For the essential vitamins may be lacking from their diet or may not be present in the form in which a tired system can extract and use them. If so, heed Nature's warning. Angiers **'Supavite'** will supply your system with the essential vitamins it simply hasn't been getting.

Re-vitaminize your diet — for 4d. a day with

SUPAVITE REGD.

TWO CAPSULES DAILY PROVIDE SIX ESSENTIAL VITAMINS in the form in which the body can use them.

Is it VITAMIN-SHORTAGE in your case?

*It only costs 4d. a day to find out. If, like so many of us, you too are a victim of unsuspected vitamin-starvation, a course of Angiers **'Supavite'** will supply all you lack in the form in which your system can absorb and use it. But do not expect **'Supavite'** results unless it is Angiers **'Supavite'** you take.*

5/- per box (15 days' supply). Family Pack (60 days' supply) 16/3d. From all Chemists.

ANGIER CHEMICAL CO. LTD., LONDON, S.E.1. Laboratories: SOUTH RUISLIP.

I thought he was the man for the job . . .

UNTIL HE TURNED TO GO

What lost him this wonderful opportunity? What evidence of carelessness did he reveal when he turned to leave the room? It was something *he* knew nothing about, an unsightly dusting of dandruff on the back of his jacket. It may seem unfair but the signs of dandruff *do* let one down in the eyes of others. And it can all be so easily avoided . . . with the aid Dr. Page Barker's Scurf and Dandruff Lotion. The treatment was evolved many years ago but the demand for it continues to grow swiftly for one powerful reason . . . it is the most effective treatment of all! Ask for Dr. Page Barker's Scurf and Dandruff Lotion at your chemists or hairdressers. Only 3/2d. a bottle, large size 4/4d.

For a complete treatment use also **DR. PAGE BARKER'S D.43 SHAMPOO**

Adds zest to life

TOP MILL SNUFF

SOLD BY ALL LEADING TOBACCONISTS

J & H WILSON LTD SHEFFIELD

Would You like a Cheque for £50?

Two separate prizes of £50 must be won this week in a unique and fascinating advertisement competition of "Fitting Phrases" which appears in this issue on pages 27 and 29. Don't on any account miss it. There is no entrance fee and full details are given on each page. Why not make it a fireside game and get all the family to help?

Turn to Pages 27 and 29

EDITORIAL

Give thanks

Now is the time to count the blessings of the passing year. They are more than most of us dared to hope for at its beginning.

First and foremost is the fact that war has been staved off. All around the surface of the globe there have been quarrels, killings, misunderstandings and misery enough. Yet the hydrogen bombs, though tested and hellishly improved, have not been launched; there has been no new world war.

There have even been signs that true peace may slowly be approaching. "I believe," said Sir Winston Churchill recently, "that we are justified in feeling that there has been a diminution of tension and that the possibilities of another world war have diminished, or at least have become more remote."

SIR EDMUND HILLARY
On top of it all

Since the announcement of Stalin's death in March, many prisoners of the Communists have been released, gaps have been opened in the Iron Curtain, the Russian Government has from time to time seemed more ready to co-operate.

Above all, the two sides in Korea have put their guns down—if not away—and have agreed to talk round a table.

At home, Coronation Year brought us sixpence off the income tax, the virtual end of rationing, a drop in some prices, a record steel output and the end of Pool petrol.

Up went the houses—255,894 in the ten months ending in October; down went unemployment.

Our skies blossomed with new, faster and more efficient British airliners. A B.O.A.C. Comet flew from London to Tokyo in 35 hr. 35 min., and the Viscount won laurels for B.E.A.

The Ashes came home at last; Gordon Pirie puffed his way to ten records; Pat Smythe and Colonel Llewellyn jumped their way to world applause. Jaguar cars almost swept the board in the Le Mans twenty-four hour race; Gordon Richards won the Derby after twenty-seven failures.

British teams of runners set up new records for relay racing. Even British Railways caught the speed fever: the new Elizabethan train covered the 392¾ miles between Kings Cross and Edinburgh in six and three-quarter hours. And Sir Winston Churchill won the Nobel Prize for Literature against all comers.

On top of it all stood Sir Edmund Hillary, first man on the peak of Everest with his comrade Tensing.

This Christmas there are many things on which we may look back with pride—and gratitude.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

It's here at last! Children stare into the night, listening for reindeer bells —and the rustle of paper parcels—while Santa Claus shuffles about in Father's slippers. In Lapland he comes on a big white goat, in Fred Laurent's native Belgium on a donkey. And if his beard is a little askew — well, he's been travelling a long time. It is more than 1,600 years since Sanctus Nicolaus, the patron saint of children, sailors and robbers, died in Myra, Asia Minor.

More people drink

WATNEYS

than any other

BROWN ALE

HAVE YOU TRIED IT?

It pays to buy
O.K
SAUCE
Britain's best!
A little 'O.K' goes a very long way. Standard Size 1/6

Try also 'O.K'
HORSERADISH SAUCE
—it's just like home made

Indigestion

sweet relief in your pocket

Slim roll pack—sweet (specially *sugar-sweetened*) tablets containing *no less than* 11 *different scientifically balanced therapeutic ingredients.* Moorland Antacid Indigestion Tablets do bring you much surer, quicker relief from indigestion, heartburn, flatulence and similar disorders. Never be without them. 1/- a packet of 4 rolls (40 tablets), 1/11*d.* a packet of 8 rolls (80 tablets). From *every* chemist.

FREE SPEECH

The legacy came too late

NOT long after my fortieth birthday I began, for the first time, to think about my old age. Until then I had never worried about money—my salary was £1,250 a year, and retirement had seemed a lifetime away.

But my post carried no pension and, with a growing family, I was spending all I earned. There was nothing over to save. So I left the work which I enjoyed and took a safe job. It was far less exciting and not quite so well paid, but there was a good pension at sixty-five. Then, quite suddenly, I lost my peace of mind completely. An uncle died, leaving me three old houses which I sold for £6,000. Now that I did not depend upon the pension to provide for my old age, I could stand my safe—and boring—job no longer. I tried to get back into my former business. But there was no place for me: I was too much out of touch. When I visited the old office I realized what a mistake I had made. For the sake of a retirement which I might never reach, I had spoilt my chance of a happy working life. I would have given up the pension and every penny of the six thousand to have worked in that office again. —CHARLES SPENCER, Hertfordshire.

The Helpmates

DURING our honeymoon at Eastbourne, my wife and I saw a blind, deaf and dumb couple stumbling across the stones to the water's edge. They undressed and put on swimming costumes, neatly stacking their clothes. After they had sunbathed a little, the woman took one end of a piece of rope in her hands and walked towards the water. Her husband payed out the rope as she went. She had a dip in the sea, and then held the rope for the man while he went in.—D. R. HULL, Tilbury, Essex.

Cash Down

THE striking of palms to clinch a cattle sale ("Free Speech," December 5) is one of many interesting old

trading customs. My photograph shows the Tome Stone at the ancient Devon port of Barnstaple. To seal a contract the merchants used to place their purchase money on the stone in the presence of witnesses. The Tome Stone dates from 1633; it was erected to replace an older stone.—HERON CARR, Worthing, Sussex.

. . . When diamond merchants clinch a deal they shake hands, and wish each other good luck with the Hebrew words "Mazzel and b'rocha."—GUY THEMYNE, London.

Precious Stones

IN Burma they have a custom which is rather similar to the Canadian shiveree ("Free Speech," December 5). At dusk the lads hide near the house of a newly married couple and throw stones on to the roof and the veranda. They take care to do no damage, but they make as much noise as they can. After a while the bridegroom will come out and ask: "How much are those stones worth?" Out of the dark voices shout: "As much as you can afford." Payment is made, and the visitors depart.—E. P., Farnworth, Lancashire.

A NEW SAINT STORY
in John Bull next week
see page 26

Coming soon
AFRICAN FURY
The life-story of a
BIG-GAME HUNTER

Surprise Attack

MY brother spent ten days in bed with a cold, sickness and severe pains in the legs. He thought it was nothing more than a bad dose of flu and sciatica. When he got about again, he found that he was limping slightly and seeing double. He went to his local hospital, and a sample of his spinal fluid was tested. Then the doctor told him that, without knowing it, he had had an attack of poliomyelitis. My brother was very surprised; as far as he knew, he had not been in contact with a polio case. The double vision soon disappeared, but he still limps a little.—MRS. STELLA CARTWRIGHT, Shropshire.

Very many people never learn that they have had polio. They have what seems like a cold with aches and pains; it passes, and there are no unpleasant after-effects. But during the "cold" they may pass polio to others, and a severe, perhaps crippling, illness may result. It is not known for certain how polio is contracted, and this makes it more difficult to check its spread. The National Fund for Poliomyelitis Research is giving financial assistance to scientists studying this problem, and many others connected with the disease. On December 27, Duncan Guthrie, the secretary of the fund, will make a radio appeal for donations to help this work.

How Now, Maryka?

THE milkman's horses described in "Free Speech" are not the only animals whose sense of direction can prove very useful. During a visit to my aunt in Lithuania when I was a girl, I once wandered far from home. I was completely lost; there was not a

peasant in sight and every field and lane looked the same to me. Then I saw about fifty cows returning from pasture. They were all black and white Friesians, except one: my aunt's brown cow, Maryka. I followed them and, surely enough, as each cow neared the townlet it turned in the direction of its own homestead. Maryka led me safely to my aunt's.—MRS. A. WISE, Waterloo Road, Manchester, 8.

The Bounder

DURING a walking tour which I made in the west of Wales last summer I had a most strange experience. When I was near Tregaron, in Cardiganshire, I was nearly knocked down by a huge dog which bounded across the road and vanished into a thicket. Although it was a fine, dry day, the dog was dripping wet. I stopped at the next house for a glass of water, and told the old lady there what I had seen. When I mentioned the dog, she snatched the glass from my hand and slammed the door. I learned later that there is a legend about a ghost-dog in those parts. It lives in ponds and only appears to human sight when someone is about to die.—EDMUND W. DAVIES, Higher Blackley, Manchester.

Eyes On The Road

AMONG my recent patients there were four men who had never had their sight tested before. They said that they wanted glasses for reading only but, in each case, I found that the standard of vision was so low that the man should have been wearing glasses constantly for years. Each of these men was driving every day—and menacing public safety. When they renewed their driving licences every year they must have stated on the form that they could read a number-plate at twenty-five yards. But not one of them could have done so.—OPHTHALMIC OPTICIAN (name and address supplied).

House Party

THE German custom (described in "Free Speech") of decorating partly completed houses with garlands of flowers has a parallel in Tuscany. As soon as the roof is finished, the national flag is run up over the new house. Then the master-carpenter offers the workmen *La Pasta Asciutta*, their favourite dish.—CLARA GRAZZINI, Via D. M. Manni, Florence.

Pasta asciutta *is the general name for preparations from flour such as macaroni or spaghetti.*

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed, and at usual rates for readers' photographs. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

BIGGEST VALUE!

5/9D

WHITEWAY'S WINE LIST

	Botts.	Ovals
RUBY and WHITE Good full-bodied wines	5/9	8/3
	(Splitlets 1/- incl.)	
BRITISH SHERRY Brown	5/9	8/3
	(Splitlet 1/- incl.)	
BRITISH SHERRY Pale Dry	9/6	—
GINGER or ORANGE WINE Full alcoholic strength	6/3	—
(Ginger Wine Splitlet 1/- incl.)		

All the above wines are available in half bottles.

Whiteways is the word for WINE!

Laid out by **COLDS?**

Not me!...

Nothing acts faster than **ANADIN**- *and it's SAFE!*

WHY 'ANADIN' GIVES FAST RELIEF

There are four reasons for the speed with which 'Anadin' tackles a cold. Aspirin, phenacetin and quinine act together to relieve discomfort and bring down temperature, while caffeine eliminates the depressing after-effects so often experienced after the use of old-fashioned remedies.

Tens of thousands of professional people who deal daily with the problem of pain know and use 'Anadin', and know 'Anadin', the fast and safe pain killer, is absolutely suitable for ordinary people.

HEADACHE
The 'Anadin' formula is a fast worker and any chemist will tell you why the relief lasts longer, without the risk of those unpleasant after-effects you used to have.

NEURALGIA
Don't suffer the stab and ache of neuralgia or any nerve pains. 'Anadin' brings fast relief without the risk of any unpleasant after-effects.

'ANADIN' Tablets . . . from chemists everywhere, 20 for 1/9d, or 50 for 3/6d

STOP children's COUGHS

A spoonful of Veno's swallowed slowly relieves the worst cough

VENO'S
COUGH MIXTURE
THE IDEAL FAMILY REMEDY
for Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Bronchial and Catarrhal Asthma & Children's Coughs
VENO DRUG CO. LTD

This smooth demulcent syrup rapidly spreads over sensitive membranes—stops the tickle

Night coughing can be a serious menace—a threat to general health—because of its effect on the nerves and its interference with sleep. VENO'S COUGH MIXTURE is particularly useful in such cases. For VENO'S is *demulcent*—that is, it spreads a soothing film over raw, inflamed membranes. It stops the irritating tickle in no time . . . allows peaceful sleep. VENO'S is SAFE, absolutely SAFE, even for small children—and yet powerfully effective for grown-ups. Keep VENO'S in the house.

In bottles 1/8d. & (Economical Family Size) 2/10d.

VENO'S LIGHTNING **COUGH MIXTURE**

FOR NIGHT COUGHS, MORNING COUGHS, CHILDREN'S COUGHS, THROAT & CHEST SORENESS

Bewitch him with your *Silken Sheen!*

THE GAIETY of your laughter . . . the enchanting radiance of your hair...cast a spell which binds him close to you. Your hair can be soft as silk, shining with the magic glitter of starlight, if you wash it with 'Vaseline' Brand Soapless Shampoo. It's *good* for your hair, makes it clean because it rinses out *completely*. Buy a packet today. NOW 4½D

Vaseline® SOAPLESS SHAMPOO *Makes your hair clean —gives it silken sheen*

®'Vaseline' is the registered trade mark of the Chesebrough Mfg. Co. Ltd.

2042-12

Have a GOOD RUM for your money

"Never argue with a man!"

If he won't eat this and he won't touch that, it is only because a sick person feels too weak to digest even the lightest of "light diet." Just quietly but firmly give him Benger's. He can and will take Benger's because being self-digested (by a unique enzymic process) it soothes his stomach and builds up his digestive strength for a quick recovery. There's nothing so nourishing or satisfying as Benger's. It gets you better quicker!

Benger's Food

★ **Benger's makes a delicious bed-time drink**
Benger's is becoming more and more popular as a bed-time drink especially with people who find milk a little "heavy." Being pre-digested it allows your digestion to rest instead of working. Naturally, you sleep better. You'll like the clean, biscuity flavour of Benger's. Try it for a change. Benger's can be made in a cup as quickly as the milk boils.

NURSE CLEARS CHILD'S ECZEMA

Read letter from Mrs. M. W. of Lincoln

Dear Sirs,

"Being a state registered nurse and midwife I have come into contact with all sorts of ointments, but I must confess I still have the utmost faith in GERMOLENE. My own son developed infantile eczema when a month old, and GERMOLENE . . . cleared it up. When I was in charge of a small nursing home in Barbados, I frequently used it for all kinds of rashes on babies, with good results always."

(Signed) M. W.

1. OWN BABY HAD ECZEMA
2. APPLIED GERMOLENE
3. CLEARED IT UP

Germolene is ideal for the tender, delicate skin of children. It soothes at a touch, stops the itching and irritation, draws out impurities, protects against the entry of harmful bacteria, and assists healing. *Use GERMOLENE for* **ECZEMA, ABRASIONS, SPOTS, CUTS, SORE FEET, RASHES** *and* **EVERYDAY SKIN AILMENTS.**

1/8 & 3/10 *a tin*

Germoplast
MEDICATED FIRST AID DRESSINGS

READY FOR ANY EMERGENCY
Prices **9d.** *and* **1/6.**
From Timothy Whites & Taylors and all other Chemists

ACIDITY and HEARTBURN?

chew a couple of

'MILK of MAGNESIA' (REGD.) TABLETS

By correcting acidity they give prompt relief from heartburn, flatulence and all other forms of acid indigestion.

***'Milk of Magnesia' Tablets have a pleasant, mild mint flavour and are so convenient to carry with you.**

Handy Pocket Packs — 9d. & 1/4½
Family Sizes — 2/9 & 4/9

* *'Milk of Magnesia' is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of magnesia.*

Music came sweetly through the still night air. The moment he stepped on to the quay, the tree sprang to life with a blaze of coloured lights

The Christmas Cruise of Father Jerome

by ***ARTHUR MAYSE***

He'd fought storm and disaster—and won. He had needed a miracle—and one had come. And now, his heart singing, he was bringing Christmas home

"ALL THEM TURKEYS, Father," said Captain Red McClintock of s.s. Redonda, "is earmarked for Morant's construction camp up at Yalquitz Inlet. About those other three cases. I'll be frank wi' ye. It's rum to go with the birds, and if ye'd as soon not handle it. . . ."

"I'm in need of ballast," said Father Jerome. The young blue eyes twinkled in his weathered, gentle old face, with its little jutting beard. "The cases will serve excellently." He tugged at his watch fob. "Now, I'd best push on if I'm to catch high water slack at Topaze Narrows."

The little missioner descended spryly from the steamer's bridge, crossed her canted deck, and with British Columbia fog swirling about him, paused by the ladder head.

He turned and called back to the bridge: "I suppose there's no further word of Agincourt's men?"

"Never a whisper," Captain Red told him. His own plight was annoying: Redonda aground on a gale-shifted bar. But there had been no word for five winter days of the crew of the Agincourt, which had broken her back at sea.

"May God be with them," Father Jerome said. "And with you, Captain. A merry Christmas!"

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

"It'll be merry, all right," Captain Red replied grimly. "But same to you, sir. Ye've lifted one load off my mind."

He watched the cargo net swing up empty, and the mission boat Mainadieu, thirty foot of old hull and antique engines, dwindled with softly thumping exhaust into the fog. The isolated folk at the top of the northern run would have a good Christmas with the stuff Father Jerome had on board. His faith in the wilderness priest was tested and complete.

Good sailormen a-plenty had refused to run the Topaze Narrows in fog. Father Jerome

Father Jerome gazed at the pathetic little figure up against the cabin wall. "I guess you'll take me to the policeman," she said

held unconcernedly to his course, chanting his Gregorian measures for company. He had been bound north for Aragon Indian Reserve to hold Christmas with Chief Peter Saul and his band when, hearing Captain Red's un-Gregorian bellows through the murk, he had poked into Nyall River estuary to investigate.

Father Jerome was happy now—happy in his errand, happy in a Master whose providence extended to small occasions as well as great—and he magnified the Lord in song from the mouth of Topaze clear through to the gut by the Middlenotch Rock.

Tide met him there, the first surge of the ebb, and for ten minutes he was too occupied for singing.

The last boil released the rudder. Father Jerome wiped spray-wet cheeks on his rusty sleeve, eased the clanking engine to half throttle, and glanced over his shoulder at the cargo in the cockpit. He should have spread a tarpaulin; the frozen turkeys had taken a dousing. Anxiously, hoping salt water wouldn't impair the flavour, he rectified the omission.

MAINADIEU carried no barometer, but the years had sharpened her master's weather sense. He knew instinctively that pressure was falling. Blackfish Reach could give a small boat a wicked dusting in a blow. As they left the narrows astern, he loosed a quick breath of relief. The steel-coloured expanse of the Reach was troubled by no worse than its customary chop.

Two trollers, large offshore craft, were pulling up on him from the south. A red head poked out of the nearest pilot house and a bull-throated hail assaulted his ears. "Hey . . . Fa-aather! Where to are yez heading?"

"Aragon," he shouted back. "By way of Yalquitz!"

"You'd be safer in a butter tub! Heave out yer fenders. Us and Gypsy Rose will snuggle yez up and trot yez across to Blackfish Point."

Gratefully, Father Jerome lowered his rubber-tyre guards. The trollers, husky, high-bowed fifty-footers, closed him from port and starboard with a purring of powerful diesels. Mainadieu's hull creaked and complained as the fishing boats sidled into position. Then, snug between them, secure in a cat's-cradle of deftly rigged lines, she forged ahead.

"And since when has the Church got gas to fritter?" That was big, ginger-haired Pat Houlihan, grinning down from his Galway Girl while his bright black eye roved the mission launch. "Just shut off yer power, sor. It's Christmas-time, and yez'll have this trip on us."

From the Galway Girl, Pat Houlihan inspected the Mainadieu's cockpit. "Dear God!" he breathed. "I'd not have believed it. . . . Father Jerome, ye've turned bootlegger. Yer boat, though it shames me to say it, is no better than a seagoing blind pig!"

The little priest had forgotten that portion of his cargo entirely. He leaped as if stung, while the colour rushed to his cheeks. Pat Houlihan checked his vehement outburst of denial and explanation with lifted hand.

"Ah, no need, no need at all. I understand entirely." The grin curved up towards Big Pat's large red ears. He said in a voice that would wheedle a bird off its perch: "Come aboard, dear man. It's funning I was, and ye have my apology. I'd be honoured to take a cup of tea with you."

THE story would travel the length of the coast, Father Jerome realized ruefully. But the offer of a mug-up in Galway Girl's warm cabin was a potent inducement. He crossed to the troller, and with Pat Houlihan's blue-jerseyed arm heavy across his shoulders, went below.

A good place to be, Father Jerome mused. And for all his rascally ways, Houlihan was a man of generous heart. He relaxed into warmth and unaccustomed security, drinking Christmas music from Galway Girl's radio with his strong tea, lulled by the throaty pulse of the diesels, snug in this hull that made summer weather of the wintry Reach.

Houlihan's voice bore in on his reverie. "Excuse me, Father. There's weather making, and I've a bit of snugging down to do topside. Pour yerself another cup while I'm gone."

The priest had been pushing along the coast since earliest dawn, and he was very tired. Drowsiness flowed through him in a creeping tide. He refilled his cup, kindled the pipe which was his one self-indulgence, and sat contemplating the fat brown teapot on Galway Girl's stove while the music caressed his spirit. A carol he had not heard before, a lovely refrain, and a boy's voice singing high and pure and true:

"I am the donkey, shabby and brown,
I carried His Mother up hill and down,
I carried her safely to Bethlehem town. . . ."

The words set him smiling. The donkey, shabby and brown. God's burden-bearer. Was it sacrilege for a priest to think of himself at times as God's donkey, stumbling but faithful, grown old and grey in service?

The thought winnowed out of reach. Father Jerome's head sagged to his forearms. He drifted fathoms deep in sleep while those worldly ladies, Galway Girl and Gypsy Rose, escorted the mission boat in towards the sheltering loom of Blackfish Point.

When Father Jerome woke, the sky through the cuddy windows was grey with evening. He started up, bewildered and disturbed. The radio chimed softly still, but it had changed its location. So had he. He lay in his bunk, in his own boat, and forward motion had yielded place to the easy sway of a craft at rest.

Now that he was full awake, the music no longer perplexed him. His own radio had been out of kilter for months, a valve gone and batteries dead. This set, he realized, was the white-cased one that had betrayed him into sleep on the salmon boat. A gift. Pleasure thrilled through him. Pat Houlihan had left him the fine little radio for a Christmas present.

On deck, he saw that Mainadieu rode to anchor in a weatherproof lagoon; Galway Girl and Gypsy Rose, their running lights aglow, were diminishing toward the hook of the point. Something about those trollers puzzled him, a certain erratic quality to their progress, as if they rolled arm in arm along a primrose path.

Father Jerome's gaze leaped to his cargo. The three cases of rum were as he had left them, but on one of his two turkey crates a wrench held down a note. He opened the folded sheet and bills fluttered to the deck.

"One bird for Pete Schultz's widow," he read, *"one for the Arnesons at Bligh Island that had the fire last month and one for the Carson Creek MacDonalds with the three pretty daughters. Thanks, Father, we knew you'd not mind."*

The note was signed "Houlihan" in a wavering lead-pencil scrawl.

One hundred and twenty men in Morant's construction camp: three turkeys from thirty left twenty-seven. They'd still dine well. The camp cook was a butter-hearted Portuguese, Father Jerome recalled. When he learned the circumstances, Manuelo would overlook the loss.

Ten minutes to five, his watch told him. He was thirty miles from the camp, ten of which was an open-water traverse across the mouth of Orion Sound. If he were to discharge his holiday lading by Christmas Eve, he must not linger on the way.

Back in the cabin, he paused to twiddle the radio dials. The announcer's voice boomed out at him:

". . . Winds of sixty-knot velocity are already battering Sandspit in the Queen Charlotte Islands, and storm warnings have been issued for waters south to Oregon. United States Coast-guard and R.C.A.F. Air-Sea Rescue teams have all but given up hope for the crew of the British freighter Agincourt, who abandoned ship five days ago two hundred miles off Cape Constance. Fog earlier today hindered the search, and with a new gale threatening. . . ."

A LINE of worry deepened across Father Jerome's forehead. He switched the radio off and ducked aft to the engine. A full gale would imprison him here for many hours, perhaps days. If he was to fulfil his mission, he must gamble with wind and sea on a night run across Orion Sound. He faced the prospect without enthusiasm.

Something else troubled him. In his nostrils persisted an odour which was no part of the familiar, multifold fragrance of Mainadieu's bilge. He sniffed again, striving to trace it. Definitely not petrol fumes—it was too heavy, too fruity for that. He eased his boat between the rock gates of the lagoon, set her on course, and darted to the cockpit. The top rum case of the three wore an air of innocence bland as that on Pat Houlihan's round face. The government seals were unbroken. There was no faintest scar of crowbar or hammer, not so much as a dint. But a tinkle of smashed glass rewarded him when he stirred the case with his gumboot, and the burned-sugar smell assailed his nose powerfully.

They hadn't broached the case. But he realized with equal certainty that its contents were gone and the antics of Galway Girl and Gypsy Rose could only have been described as tipsy.

Rounding the hook of Blackfish Point, feeling the first uneasy lift of Mainadieu's bows to the weather, Father Jerome tried to assure himself that the construction workers at Yalquitz Inlet were better off for a few bottles the less. But

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Mrs. Watson watches as Sheila, a friend of the family, rolls the dice. Norman Watson (second from left) and his two sons await their turn

Norman Watson wins a fortune from fun and games

by ANTONY FERRY

There's money in the parlour pastimes business, but competition is fierce. Ideas for new games pour into Norman Watson's office. He studies them all, for one may be a gold-mine

ONE DAY LAST SEPTEMBER, a young man called at the Leeds branch of John Waddington, Ltd., with a large flat box wrapped in newspaper. He was ushered into the office of Norman Victor Watson, an ebullient Yorkshireman who has probably amused more British families over a long period than anyone else alive. But before the visitor could speak, Watson said, "Don't unwrap it!" and buzzed for his secretary.

"Bring this brave young man a cup of tea," he said. "He thinks he's found me a new family game."

Then he announced emphatically: "If it's a new version of Monopoly, I'm not interested; if it's based on the rules of rummy, I can't use it; and if it's a game about an outdoor sport, I don't even want to see it." Puzzled by the young man's grin, he said finally: "Well, then, so long as it's not about Wimbledon, the Test Matches, climbing Everest or swimming the Channel, I'll have a quick look." The package was opened, and Watson, who works a ten-hour day and hates wasting a minute of it, had a long look.

Since then, the identity of the young visitor and the contents of the mysterious package that he brought to Leeds have become a closely guarded secret. To protect it, Waddington's has had to cloak itself in the tense atmosphere of a colony of atomic scientists.

Parlour games may seem a trifling form of amusement to the uninitiated, but to those in the trade they are a hectic, often adventurous, scramble for ideas. At best, the race is run with tremendous rivalry by more than sixty firms which compete in a market that annually grosses well over £2 million. At worst, which Watson says is most of the time, the business is a madcap treasure hunt where nine out of every ten participants are gatecrashers out to make a quick fortune.

"Britain is divided," says Watson. "Half the population at one time or another plays family games. The other half devotes all its energy to thinking up new ones."

When Tommy Handley was introduced with a new catchword during a wartime broadcast, fifty people a day sent in ideas for a new family game called: "It's That Man Again!" They converged from such scattered points as Aberdeen, Oswaldtwistle and Torquay. Each one had to be considered but, Watson says, "They

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was paying O'Hoolihan the fantastic rental of two dollars a day.

During these walks he met all curious eyes with a supercilious, almost imperceptible nod, as if not noticing the fact that nobody ever nodded in return.

The first morning he asked in Flexmore Munro's blacksmith's shop, in Hiram Deyell's butcher shop, and at the mill for someone he could hire to row him while he fished. It was all right to beat the Englishman by overcharging for some things, but no one would risk eternal damnation or, worse, a lifetime of local jibes, by working for an Englishman at any price. So he rowed the boat himself, cast his lure over the stern when he reached the deep water, and kept the rod handy at his feet, grabbing it each time one of the huge fish struck at the spinning spoons.

Off and on through the days, the men of the village would stop work and stroll to the bridge and watch him rowing steadily through the channels and bays. Once, when he drifted close to the bridge while playing a fish, it was seen that he tired the fish entirely, a task of three hours, then extricated the hooks with pliers and let it go, although the men on the bridge estimated its length at six feet, which would give it a weight of close to a hundred pounds.

This established that he really believed fish were to be caught five times as big, and would trouble with nothing smaller, which confirmed him as a fool. But it was really not enough that the village should be content with branding any Englishman only as a fool, and when the tensions of frustrated curiosity became too high at the end of the fifth day, it was Red Ab Magee who declared the Englishman to be also a coward and proposed the ingenious plan by which this cowardice, Red Ab contended, could be proved.

For a brief moment, he thought of escape, but only for a moment. He felt the rope slip under him, and heard Deyell's voice : "Don't move now, or you'll stab yourself on one of these hooks"

RED AB MAGEE was a bachelor of thirty, a reckless and handsome young man who drank and loved widely and well. Since his teens he had sought mischief through the countryside as a soldier would seek medals. Not a bad man when sober, he was not too often sober, and that day while driving his dray team down to the mill he had been the recipient of one of the Englishman's nods. Where others only resented the nod, it had infuriated Red Ab. And that same night he encountered the Englishman at the Emerald Inn bar.

On other evenings, it had been the Englishman's custom to stroll through the tree-lined streets, nodding to those he passed. But this night rain fell heavily, and the Englishman came a little after nine from his room to the bar, where Red Ab Magee and some of his friends had been drinking for more than an hour now.

The instant the Englishman appeared in the doorway the air was full of trouble. He paused for a few seconds, as well-groomed as ever. He glanced into the hostile eyes which had turned to watch him, gave his maddening nod, then walked to one end of the bar and said in a precise, high, English voice: "Scotch and soda, it you please!"

O'Hoolihan was washing glasses. At once he glanced along the bar at Red Ab, dark-faced and bulky in his drover's overalls, because in the last half hour Red Ab had been most devastating in his summation of the Englishman's habits and person. Then he slowly dried his hands, ran a hand over his slick hair, and asked Flexmore Munro, the blacksmith, if he needed another drink.

Munro, his hairy arms sprawled on the bar like exposed roots from an oak tree, silently picked up the bottle in front of him and poured himself half a tumbler of Irish whiskey.

"How about you?" O'Hoolihan asked Hiram Deyell, the small and dirty little butcher, whose sharp eyes on the Englishman were a mixture of anticipation and bravado.

Deyell poured himself another drink.

O'Hoolihan stopped at Milton O'Connell, the well-digger, a swarthy, big man whose face carried a sort of hard merriment in it always, a dangerous man. O'Connell also poured his own, as did Red Ab Magee, and finally O'Hoolihan arrived at the end of the bar, placed a bottle in front of the Englishman, added a siphon of soda.

"Five cents, that'll be," he said.

The Englishman paid. O'Hoolihan walked along the bar, knowing without a glance that the others appreciated his insult of making the Englishman wait, and then pay even before he drank.

For a short time no one spoke. The rain beat down outside, thrumming on the windows at the front.

A door slammed in another part of the hotel, which was empty of all but a few salesmen who were properly timorous of the night-time activities of the buying public here. A shutter rattled in the gusty wind. The resentment of the ill-dressed, labouring Irishman for this foppish Englishman was almost a palpable thing.

Although not a word yet had been spoken, the feel of the place was such that when Mrs. Cockeyed Casey waddled in, swathed in dripping oilskins, and put down her pail and three dollars for a gallon of whiskey, and opened her mouth to speak, she thought better of it and left without speaking.

BUT it was only a question of time. Red Ab Magee drained his drink and poured another and stood back from the bar. He shuffled his feet in the sawdust and faced upwards into the oil lamps that guttered and blazed as someone opened a door or window in another part of the hotel, then opened the baiting of the Englishman.

"If you're planning to open your bar as well as your inn to anyone now, O'Hoolihan, I've been meanin' to tell you, you'll be losin' many customers, includin' me," he said.

O'Hoolihan understood that it was not really for him, so he said nothing. The Englishman gave no sign that he had heard. He filled his glass again from the bottle before him, splashed in some soda water, and sipped his drink. The Irishmen drank on and the silence extended, and then Milton O'Connell, with a chuckle, conducted the next movement.

"In Dublin once," he said, "a young tinker travelled from door to door, selling his pots and pans, and mending some. At one door a lovely young geryl with light hair answered his knock, and he was much taken with her. She wanted to buy some of his pots but said she would have her husband look at them first, and she called her husband and he was a Chinaman. . . ."

Two Metcalfes had entered, and a Fee and a McQuade, and knowing the story, like the others, they settled, grinning, for the ending, all watching the Englishman.

MILTON O'CONNELL continued: "The Chinaman liked the pots, and said they might be purchased, then retired again to the other room. When he was gone, the tinker said in a low voice to the lovely geryl: 'Ye mean to say that a lovely geryl like yourself is married to a Chinaman?' And the geryl laughed and said: 'Ah, that's nothing. I've a sister down the street is married to an Englishman!'"

Flexmore Munro's ox-like roar dominated the laughter, and all watched the Englishman for his reaction. He said nothing, made no sign but the merest flicker of a smile that he had heard.

It was Hiram Deyell who finally found the key. He dug in his dark-stained leather apron to fill his pipe from the loose tobacco there, and while lighting the pipe from a candle on the bar for that purpose, he said: "We have heard a queer story about you, mister, that you expect to catch fish in the lake weighing four and five hundred pounds. . . ."

For the first time addressed directly, Peart spoke. "That is true."

"A man who thinks like that," said Flexmore Munro, "needs a bloody good clout on the head to restore his senses."

Peart shrugged, again refusing to be insulted.

But Hiram Deyell nudged Munro to silence, working in a more subtle manner, and said: "Why do you think you will find fish that size?"

"It is only a theory of mine," the Englishman said. "But it is true that the biggest fish are

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AN ENGLISHMAN IN TOWN

by ***SCOTT YOUNG***

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

He was everything they loathed: proud, aloof, unfriendly—a typical Englishman. They were going to teach him a lesson he'd never forget

FOR FIVE DAYS, from the evening the Englishman stepped down from the east-bound, claimed his baggage, and took a seat in the horse-drawn carriage which met trains in the interests of O'Hoolihan's Emerald Inn, the village of Irishman's Lake watched him closely. It was in the early 1900s in the Canadian backwoods. Visitors were rare, Englishmen at that place almost unheard of.

A few men were fortunate enough to be around O'Hoolihan's lobby for the comical sight of O'Hoolihan blandly quadrupling his rates at the first sound of the English voice giving the name Ambrose Peart, but other villagers had to be content with much less. What they could see, they could see. What they could hear was very little, apart from O'Hoolihan's own report of a conversation he had with Peart regarding the renting of a skiff on the lake.

"Told me he thought there must be fish weighing four or five hundred pounds in the lake, the damn' fool," O'Hoolihan told many people later, chuckling deep in his thick chest.

"What did you say to that, O'Hoolihan?"

"Said he was a damn' fool."

Everyone in the village wanted to know more, where Peart was from, where he was going, how long he would stay. But here curiosity collided with history and history came out on top. When the Irish, thin from the potato famine of the late 1840s, came to this mile-wide Ontario valley, the oldest living now were children then. But memory is bright in the Irish and is kept bright by each new generation. The English had transported them here at no cost and given them land at no cost, and this was charity; it fed, not lessened, the traditional hatreds. So no matter how curious were the Irish about this Englishman, conversation with him was just plain against the grain.

But they could watch him.

EACH morning at nine he appeared in front of the three-storey red brick of O'Hoolihan's Emerald Inn. He was more than six feet tall, very thin, with narrow shoulders and a small head. His nose was large and beaked, his eyebrows bushy, and his hair was red and thick under a tweed hat which matched his four-button jacket and knee breeches. His shoes were soft and highly polished below grey woollen stockings which met his trousers just below the knee. His linen was soft and white in the summer sunshine, as he strode under the maples, along the board sidewalk, carrying a huge steel rod, a reel as big as a stool filled with strong green line, and a lure, of spoons and feathers, fully three feet long.

He walked east the two blocks of the main street and turned right down across the low wooden bridge to the jetty behind Metcalfe's mill. Tied up there was the skiff for which he

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Coolly, unconcernedly, Ambrose Peart strode along the sidewalk. He took no notice of the stares and scowls that followed him; he was afraid of no one

DETECTIVES IN KHAKI (5) *by Norman Phillips*

On the trail of mystery and murder

Life was cheap in the Middle East, and the S.I.B. dossiers grew. Five privates had killed the chemist by the roadside—but how did the soldier from Cairo die?

MORDECAI JACOBOWITZ, a chemist from Ir-Ganim who worked for Consolidated Refineries in the Middle East, was cycling along a lonely road outside Haifa on a Sunday night in June, 1943. It was nearly midnight when his lamp picked out two groups of three soldiers walking towards him. He heard someone shout, "Here comes one!" before two of the soldiers grabbed him around the neck and threw him to the ground. A third stabbed him in the back with an army jack-knife. He managed to whisper, "I've got no money on me." Then a hand closed over his mouth and the man with the knife plunged the blade into his neck.

A car coming from Haifa caused the six assailants to run, leaving Jacobowitz groaning at the wayside with thirty wounds. One of the six fell and was separated from his friends. When he got up, he started to run towards the city. As he did so, he fell into the arms of three civil policemen. "What's the hurry?" asked a policeman, looking at the panting soldier in his bloodstained uniform. "I've been robbed," he said. "Three soldiers—they took ten shillings from my cigarette case."

He was taken into the guardhouse of a nearby ordnance depot. He was a sallow-faced youngster of about twenty, and he gave his number and name as N14192, Private Gordon Dowdall, of the Union Defence Force. The policemen looked at the cigarette case which he said had contained his money. They noted that Dowdall himself was not injured, so that the blood on his clothes must have been shed by someone else. They did not know that Jacobowitz was bleeding to death a few hundred yards away, so they released Dowdall.

Not five minutes later, the police went back on patrol and found the dying chemist. All he could say was that he had been attacked by six soldiers who spoke English. He was taken to a first-aid post and then to the Hadassah Hospital. At ten minutes after midnight, detectives of the British Army's Special Investigation Branch were called to the scene.

Hunt For Bloodstained Man

C.S.M. Gordon Wright (now a Metropolitan mounted constable) went to work. He issued a general alarm for the detention of any soldier wearing bloodstained uniform and began the search for Dowdall's unit. Wright learned that a group of South Africans were at 163 Transit Camp, and at 9 a.m. the camp reported that Dowdall had been picked up.

"Why am I inside?" were Dowdall's first words. Wright asked him to account for his movements. The soldier coolly repeated his story of being robbed, but this time claimed that his money *and* cigarette case had been stolen. He blamed the bloodstains on a bleeding nose, and said that he had washed his uniform that morning and had it dried by seven.

Wright was not impressed with the story and had Dowdall brought to the S.I.B. office. "You're lying," Wright told him. "First you said your cigarette case was not stolen, now you say it was. Tell me the truth about last night."

The South African denied any part in the attack on Jacobowitz. "May God strike me dead if I lie," he declared.

Jacobowitz died the next day. At 1 p.m., Dowdall decided to talk. "Will you help me?" he asked. "I'm going to tell the truth about Sunday night. I was there when the civilian was stabbed." C.S.M. J. Evans took down his statement, which named his five companions. Wright asked Dowdall how the chemist had been killed. "Well, sir," he said calmly, "you know how you'd cut a loaf of bread. One of us held the man's head and another worked the old jack-knife across his throat."

Wright was assigned by Lieutenant Alec Farrow (now a Shropshire Constabulary inspector) to pick up the other five South Africans, but when he reached the transit camp, the unit had left for Egypt. An odd twist to the case was the fact that the South Africans enlisted for service on the continent of Africa only, and never should have been sent to Palestine.

Wright located them at the South African base, Garawi, Egypt, and with the co-operation of the Union Defence Force he arrested Privates J. Abrahams, F. Sass, B. Ortell, T. Stevens and Johannes Samuels.

Samuels, who was only seventeen, was acquitted by the Court of Criminal Assize in Haifa. Dowdall and the four others were convicted and hanged at Acre Prison.

Farrow, a sandy-haired Tynesider, who was in charge of the Jacobowitz murder investigation and followed it through the complicated legal processes of assize court trial and appeal, later served in Eritrea, where justice is sometimes more primitive. There, the S.I.B. was called in when tribesmen ambushed a small convoy from Abyssinia. Word of the attack was brought in by a corporal who escaped, and Farrow, with an Italian doctor from Agardat, went to the scene. In the rear lorry they found the mutilated body of the regimental sergeant-major who had been driving.

Hanged Them Without Trial

"Galla tribesmen did this," the doctor declared. "You can tell by the mutilations." Farrow passed the information to the Abyssinian police, who had jurisdiction over the Galla. The Abyssinians sent an armed party into the nearest Galla village, seized sixteen males and, with no trial at all, hanged them publicly in the market-place as a reprisal for the killing of the regimental sergeant-major.

Public executions are commonplace in the Middle East, and in Baghdad one of Farrow's colleagues, Major L. B. Mountford, witnessed the execution of two Arabs whom he had arrested for the garrotting of an Indian Army soldier.

The victim, a Mahratta, had been walking through a poor quarter of Baghdad with another member of his unit. The two became separated and one of them was later fished out of the Tigris River. Mountford located his comrade

Defallah, an Arab tracker used by the S.I.B. In a hunt for hidden arms, he accidentally led detectives to drugs buried by his own tribe

Through Defallah, his tribe offered to barter stolen guns for drugs dug up by the S.I.B. Crocker risked it, but kept a gun in Defallah's back

and retraced the route of their last walk together. Near where the two soldiers had parted, the S.I.B. man noticed a bridge over a street; the structure joined the first storeys of two houses. Mountford was curious enough to examine the bridge, and his keen blue eyes picked out the traces of rope burns.

He continued his search and found a minute scrap of cloth, such as the Mahrattas wear under their turbans. In one of the houses he discovered a brass button from the victim's uniform. The soldier's paybook was found in the possession of the two occupants of the house.

The murderers had lassoed the Mahratta as he walked under the bridge. He choked to death as they hauled him up to rob him. Turned over to the civil authorities, the killers were tried and executed in similar fashion. Two tripods with dangling nooses were erected in a public place. The murderers were placed on tables, the ropes were adjusted around their necks, and their sentence read aloud. With a jerk, the tables were pulled out from under them.

One particularly brutal murderer who escaped the death penalty was Private Jackson Mkatshana, a transport driver with the Union Defence Force in Tripolitania. Mkatshana's temper got the better of him one day in February, 1945, when he was driving a load of turf and Italian prisoners of war to the Tripoli Stadium.

Near Suk-el-Guima, the truck overtook a donkey-cart driven by Ashur Ben Mohammed. Mkatshana pressed on the hooter and, in the time-honoured manner of lorry drivers, shouted: "Why don't you get off the road?"

The Arab could not understand English, and paid no attention. This infuriated the truck driver and he drew alongside the donkey-cart and grabbed Ashur by his clothes. The truck stalled and Mkatshana jumped out, hammer in hand, and chased the Arab. Only the intervention of the Italians stopped the driver from assaulting his quarry.

As they were leading him back to the lorry, an Arab bystander said something that Mkatshana took as an insult. He grabbed a screwdriver from the cab of his vehicle and stabbed the second Arab to death.

Lieutenant E. G. Evans (now with Essex County Police) investigated the killing and had little difficulty in tracing the killer and witnesses of the attack. Mkatshana was convicted by a South African court martial which was empowered only to impose a life sentence.

Traffic accidents frequently occupied the attention of S.I.B. investigators. One of the most unusual cases followed the discovery of the dead body of a soldier at El Maadi, about four miles outside Cairo. George Corney, a dark and burly member of the Hampshire Constabulary, traced the victim by his paybook and interviewed two of his friends. The three men had been walking across a street in Cairo when the victim disappeared.

ILLUSTRATION BY CASWELL

The two soldiers were positive that there had been no accident. Pressed, they recalled looking back for their friend and seeing only a light army vehicle. It was, they thought, a Humber. Corney had no alternative but to check all vehicles of this type. He went to his friend, Dr. Sami Bey, an Egyptian police pathologist, and obtained chemicals with which to detect the presence of human bloodstains. A ramp was built at the police headquarters in Bab-el-Hadid barracks, and Corney began to test the hundreds of Humber trucks in Cairo and the Canal Zone. On the third day, a vehicle with bloodstains on the chassis was found. Laboratory tests confirmed that the blood was of the same group as the victim's.

The driver, who admitted driving along the street where the dead man had been missed by his friends, swore that he had not noticed any collision. Corney could not find any witnesses, but he is still convinced that the scientific tests proved that the victim had been knocked down and carried more than three miles on the underframe of the vehicle, unknown to the driver.

Chemicals were also used to trace thieves, and on one occasion trapped a spy. This was in Jerusalem at a time when Jewish terrorists were a major problem. A member of an illegal Jewish organization managed to get employment as a

Watched by Palestine Police and an S.I.B. sergeant, an Arab tracker interprets a trail with uncanny skill. One tracker spent two days in the desert, hunting down two escaping Germans

clerk in the S.I.B. office. The presence of an inside leak became obvious one day when a complete set of court martial exhibits disappeared from the safe.

Farrow, then stationed in Jerusalem, took his own wallet, sprinkled it with dye-powder that leaves a stain on anyone touching it, and placed the wallet in the safe. Then he and all his staff left the office, ostensibly for lunch.

When they returned, the wallet had disappeared from the safe. In a back room, Farrow found the civilian clerk feverishly scrubbing to remove the brilliant stains from his fingers.

Arab Trackers On The Trail

More often, the S.I.B. in the Middle East was forced to work without the scientific aids to detection which are available to modern police forces. Native trackers were often employed as a substitute. These men had an uncanny ability at picking up the trail of criminals. When the big ordnance depot at Geneifa, Egypt, was being built and there were thefts every night, it became a regular assignment for Sergeant Bill Allen to take a tracker to the camp site each morning.

"He'd put the end of his Arab robe into his mouth," Allen recalls, "and stare at the ground. Suddenly, he'd start off at a trot, and I'd follow in a truck. A couple of miles on, the tracker would stop, prod the sand with his stick and there would be the loot. You and I wouldn't know if a herd of elephants had been there."

Allen once took a tracker on the trail of two Nazi prisoners who had escaped near Geneifa. The tracker described the men, pointing out where they had paused, and what they had eaten. Finally, he struck out into the desert, leaving Allen behind. Two days later, the sergeant received a report from the tracker, who announced that the two escaped prisoners had obtained blue Arab costumes and had caught a train for Palestine. The train was raided—and, sure enough, the Germans were found in borrowed blue robes.

Early in 1944, Arab thieves raided a mobile bath unit at Tahag, in Egypt, and stole six tommy guns. Sergeant R. Vickers and a native tracker named Defallah were assigned to the case.

Defallah picked up the trail at the laundry and followed it to the Sweetwater Canal. Vickers spotted some disturbed ground and ordered it to be dug up. They unearthed a number of brown packages. "Just dates," said Defallah. "Throw them away." However, Vickers brought the parcels back to his commanding officer, Major Ronnie Crocker. "Dates my eye!" said Crocker. "That's opium, and Defallah jolly well knows it."

Crocker told Defallah that he could make amends for this lapse only by finding the missing weapons. The tracker went away and came back with an offer to swap the drugs for the tommy guns. Crocker agreed to meet the bandits in the desert. The exchange took place behind a sandhill miles from anywhere.

"It was unorthodox and it was risky" Crocker recalls. "What beat everything was the cheek of the robbers. They demanded the numbers of the stolen guns. They said they might give us back the wrong ones if we didn't have the numbers. I was a little anxious, as there was nothing to stop them shooting us and keeping both the drugs and the guns. They didn't do so because I had a gun sticking into Defallah's back, and had one shot been fired, Master Defallah would have joined his ancestors. You see, I had discovered we were doing business with Defallah's own tribe."

R.S.M. Colin Holmes noticed, as he walked the streets of Alexandria, that considerable amounts of steel were being used in new buildings. Thousands of tons of steel were coming into Egypt for use by the British Army. These shipments came from Britain, the United States and India at the risk of merchant seamen's lives. The thought that this vital material was being stolen for use in non-essential civilian construction work galled "Pop" Holmes.

He issued instructions that lorries carrying steel out of army dumps must be followed. The first evidence of irregularity was obtained on November 23, 1942. The final arrests were made on March 18, 1943, and by that time Holmes had been responsible for arresting thirty-three contractors, including Ali Bey Ibrahim, who was King Farouk's own contractor. They were all found guilty, and after a five-week trial received sentences of from six months to three years.

The S.I.B. recovered twenty-seven tons of steel worth about £100 a ton on the black market. Thousands of tons had disappeared, and today, in his home at Leek, where he is a sergeant with the Staffordshire Constabulary, Holmes estimates that the racket cost the War Department something like £3 million before the S.I.B. stepped in and smashed the ring.

An average of about half a million pounds in stolen army property was recovered by the S.I.B. each year during the war, and amply justified the expense of maintaining a force which never exceeded five hundred men in the Middle East. On one occasion an S.I.B. raid brought in an entire donkey and camel train. The owners dared not claim the animals, so they were sold and the money turned in to the Command Paymaster.

Thieves Were Caught By Dogs

Colonel Claude Harper, who commanded the S.I.B. in the Middle East, was one of the men responsible for opening a military police dog school at Almaza, Cairo. One dog was reckoned to be the equal of ten sentries. Some were trained to bark and others to attack, and in the first two years of their employment these military police dogs captured about a thousand thieves.

Boxers and Alsatians were the best breeds for the work, and were often teamed together. The Alsatian would draw the attention and, if necessary, the fire from the thief by weaving in at him. The boxer ran straight in to knock down and hold his man.

Egyptians say that a dog does not lie—their courts accept evidence of identification made by a dog—and British policemen who served in Egypt are inclined to agree. Harold Dibbins, a Metropolitan C.I.D. man, who was one of the original S.I.B. investigators, once watched a civil case where an Egyptian police dog was used.

The suspect was placed fourth in a line of twelve men on an identification parade. The dog was shown a scrap of clothing found at the scene of the crime. He smelled the cloth and then circled the twelve men. He walked around the line again, this time eliminating two men from each end.

On his next inspection, the dog divided the remaining eight men into two equal groups and concentrated on the group containing the suspect. Finally the dog stopped in front of the suspected criminal, sprang up and placed his forepaws on the man's shoulders. It was enough to convict him in court.

Arabs Found A Fighter Plane

Informers were also important to the S.I.B. in the Middle East, and many arrests and recoveries of stolen property were achieved through the aid of special funds provided to pay for information.

Normally, informers were paid a percentage on the value of stolen property recovered. The record was probably set by R.S.M. Johnny Walker (now a Cheshire Constabulary constable) who was approached by Arab villagers in Syria and asked if the army would be interested in a fighter aeroplane. The Arabs had indeed recovered an intact fighter which had been abandoned during the Syrian campaign. They received £500 in payment, at a rate of ten per cent of the machine's assessed scrap value.

One informer who refused a reward was a R.E.M.E. craftsman named King, who exposed a racket at a Heavy Repair Workshop at

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THE MAN FROM THE TURKISH SLAVE

by *VICTOR CANNING*

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

He was unarmed and exhausted, trapped on the craggy rim of a volcano. Below him was a gaping crater—and facing him was a man with a shotgun

PORTOS MARIAS, an island fishing village off the Brazilian coast, was carnival mad. In a quayside café, Peter Landers watched a girl dancing voluptuously. She was Anita, a chambermaid —and round her neck she wore a fabulous pearl collar. She could only have stolen it from his room. . . .

Landers was in Portos Marias to trace stolen jewels. The stuff was smuggled in from Europe on shady tramp steamers—and he had signed on one of them, the Turkish Slave. He had been in time to see a small consignment handed over to a fishing boat one night before he was observed. Then, ruthlessly, he had been stabbed and flung overboard.

Somehow, he had survived that desperate night in the sea. And after being rescued by a girl—she was Tereza das Tegas, daughter of the island's chief landowner, he learned later—he had seen the fishing boat in the small harbour. So the jewels were still in Portos Marias. . . .

Who was behind the racket? For a moment, Peter had suspected an American biologist, Lesset. But it was too absurd—the man was obviously wrapped up in his work. With the help of Tereza and her vast, amiable father, Quisto, Peter knew now that the jewels were packed in bogus food tins and sent with the island's regular output of tinned fish to the mainland. He removed the jewels from one tin —and Anita was now wearing some of them.

As he followed the girl from the café, Peter's nerves were taut with anxiety. Anita, playing the coquette with him, didn't realize the danger. For the owners of the fishing boat, Vasco and Manuel Pastori, and Assis, the huge, lumbering fisherman who worked for them, would be after the jewels. So would Jaeger, a political refugee, who was also in the racket.

On the dark slopes outside the village, he caught up with Anita, and at last managed to get the pearls. He was making his way back to the village when it happened. Someone struck him a violent blow on the head, and he went out like a light.

PART 4

Search for Peter

FIFTEEN minutes after Peter had gone, Tereza went to look for him. There was no sign of him in Grazia's bodega. She walked around the square and up and down some of the streets searching for him. After an hour she was worried. She had not seen Peter

Peter jerked round, and knew he was trapped. Assis stood over him, holding a shotgun. The twin barrels were a few inches from his face

or Anita. Assis she saw once down by the jetty. Doctor Jaeger and the Pastori brothers also were missing. She became convinced that something had happened to Peter.

Wondering if he had caught Anita and perhaps taken her up to the villa, she went up there. The house was deserted.

She stood in the garden, undecided. A few paper lanterns still burned. The long table was a white wreck of dirty plates and dishes. From below in the square an occasional firework soared skyward and there was the thin tinkle of Grazia's piano still. It would be some time before people went to bed; not until four or five in the morning. Then for an hour people would sleep. But the square would be crowded again at six, when the fishing-boat Borrisco was due to return for the ceremony of the Blessing of the Boats—with Quisto on board.

She ran into the house and stripped off her yellow silk dress and pulled on a rough skirt and a blouse. She went down to the square, but there was no sign of Peter. The piano tinkled on at Commere Grazia's and a few people, jealous of their gaiety, still danced.

Among them was Anita. Tereza saw that the pearl collar was no longer round the girl's neck. She waited until Anita was alone and then went up to her where she stood in the shadows of the trellis vine.

"Anita. Where's Senhor Peter?"

"Senhor Peter? Why should I know?" Anita's face was suddenly taut and her eyes angry.

"Anita——" Tereza caught her arm, shaking her. "This is serious. You will tell me when you last saw Senhor Peter."

"Find him." Anita jerked herself free and raced into the bodega.

Tereza made a movement to follow. Then she gave up. Anita was jealous and she knew that, even if she could catch her, she would get nothing from her.

She turned back to the square. Her anxiety was now becoming fear. Something had happened to Peter. If only Quisto were here. . . .

She went and sat on an upturned boat below the square wall, and thought it out. After a time she got up and, crossing the square, made for the church. Of all the people on the island, Father Gordano was the right man.

It took her some time to rouse anyone in the small house he occupied at the side of the church. Finally his housekeeper came to the window and leaned out.

"Tereza! What is it?"

"I want to speak to Father Gordano."

"But he is not here."

"Where is he?"

"He said he would be back just before six for the ceremony. He has gone to Alfieri. It is happening at last. The boy came for the blessed father just after the Borrisco left."

Tereza thanked her and turned away.

Alfieri was an old shepherd who lived on the far side of the island. He had been ill for weeks, slowly dying. And now Father Gordano had been called to administer the last rites.

To whom must she go now? Someone with authority, someone who would know the best thing to do.

Then she thought of Grazia, shrewd and full of common sense. Grazia was the one. Between them they might get some sense out of Anita if she could be found.

Tereza hurried into a side turning opposite the church to take a short cut to the bodega. As she moved down the dark, narrow street, she heard footsteps behind her. She glanced back but could see no one. The steps grew closer, hurrying after her. A swift alarm struck through her. She was being followed. She began to run, and the steps behind her broke into a faster rhythm. She sped on.

Then from a doorway she had a glimpse of Assis's face. He threw himself upon her and, as she opened her mouth to shout for help, he clapped a great hand across her lips. At the same moment, struggling and kicking, she felt someone else seize her from behind.

* * *

The room came floating into Peter's consciousness as though he were seeing it through a net curtain that billowed and swung in a draught.

He was lying on a couch that seemed to dip and slant like a raft swayed by a long sea. Faces floated above the heaving water. They came and went, disembodied and restless. There was the face of Vasco Pastori, a long, scarred brown face, sucked in on itself by thin lips beneath the limp moustache; then Manuel's, pig-dog, obese, and grinning.

The raft slewed and dipped and the black sea covered him. He groaned and tried to find the floor with his feet. Someone helped him, swivelling his legs off the couch. A firm hand pressed his head down to his knees. He was held like that for a while, and then released, his head clearing.

He raised his eyes and the room steadied, and from a focal point, which was a bottle on a table before him, a widening aurora of clarity curled back. He saw the bottle and some glasses, and then behind them a tank, faintly lit by an overhanging electric light. Vague shapes drifted in the tank, dim papery scraps of fish and a spider-crab that stalked, hesitant and angular. Then there were more tanks, unlit, grey-green ice-blocks in the far gloom.

Near the table before him sat Vasco and Manuel, like sculptured figures, very still, watching him. In one hand, Manuel held the pearl collar, his eyes on Peter.

There it was, the whole room; the unshaded light over the centre tank, Manuel and Vasco, and behind them a great fringe of shadows, and somewhere in these shadows was the sound of movement, of another person. Peter leaned back and took a deep breath. Something had gone wrong. It was his sole thought. His head ached and there was a curious throbbing in his body. It took him some time to realize that it was his heart pounding away.

In the shadows a voice said in Portuguese: "Assis is all right. He's a little drunk, but not enough to matter. He's going to check the boat and see the petrol's all right. There are people about still."

Vasco nodded and, as Peter swayed forward, put out a foot and pushed him back.

Samuel Lesset came forward now into the cone of light, his great head cocked sideways. He nodded at Peter, smiling, and then lifting the bottle from the table, poured a drink. Sitting on the couch, he held the glass to Peter's mouth, one hand supporting his neck.

He held him gently, carefully scooping up the brandy that ran over Peter's chin with the edge of the glass.

"You're giving me a lot of trouble, young man. A lot of trouble."

Peter stared at him, his mind slowly clearing. Now, he was understanding. Not one man—Jaeger—behind the fishermen, but two. And Lesset had been there when Anita danced. He should have been surprised but he wasn't. It was almost as though he had lost the ability to be surprised. All that was in him now was disgust for his own stupidity.

"You'll feel fine in a while, son." Lesset stood up.

Peter looked from one to the other of the Pastori brothers. Momentarily he considered his chances against them. No. Between them they would have no trouble with him. He reached up a hand, touching the bump behind his ear, and a spurt of anger swept through him at the sight of Lesset smiling. The American stood there like some large, ruffled-up bird, amiable, the dark eyes warm under their bushy brows.

"Surprised, son? Or did you know?"

Peter had a quick picture of Tereza waiting for him, maybe looking for him. The less this man knew, the better.

He looked up with dazed eyes. "This won't do you any good." His voice was surly.

"I can make something out of it." Lesset put one hand on the table, and leaned across. "Important thing at this moment is whether you are going to be sensible or heroic. I don't recommend the heroic. People get hurt that way."

"What do you think you're going to do with me?"

Lesset laughed. "You sound indignant." He went on good-naturedly: "Don't worry. I'm not going to do anything. I don't like this situation any more than you do. You'd be surprised in fact how little interested I am in you. You're the least of my worries—but don't get angry about that." He took the pearl collar

Landers looked up with dazed eyes. His head

ached and his body throbbed. Someone stood in the cone of light, holding the pearl collar. "I want the rest of this stuff," the man said. "Where is it?"

from Manuel and held it up. "I want the rest of this stuff. Where is it?" His voice hardened with the question.

"I'd be a damned fool to tell you that!"

Lesset shook his head. "No heroics. I thought that was understood. I could chase Anita—if I had time, but we're leaving with the first light and she's a difficult girl to catch."

"No matter what you do, you should see you can't get away with this."

"I've been getting away with a great deal more for a very long time. Be sensible. Remember that. I'm being patient—but I can give up words if necessary. Don't get the impression that I have any tender regard for your well-being. Nobody cared a damn for you when you were knocked off the Turkish Slave——"

Surprise came back to Peter and could not be hidden. Lesset chuckled as he saw him half rise and then subside again on to the couch.

"I was a fool not to have got that one earlier. But I'm not concerned with that now. Tell me where to get the rest of the stuff and I'll see that you are left here comfortable when we leave. Someone will find you in a few hours."

PETER leaned forward. "You haven't a hope. The moment I'm free the whole place will know about you and the other boats will be after you. You might as well pack it in now."

"No other boat can touch us. Vasco has the fastest boat in the fleet. We only need a few hours' start. . . . Give, son. Where's the rest of the stuff?"

Peter stood up. Vasco made a move towards him but Lesset waved him back.

"Listen, Lesset." He tried to make his voice firm and confident. "You're in trouble right now. You were right about my coming from the Slave. But do you think I've kept all this to myself? Quisto knows about it, Captain Guarani at the cannery knows and several others. By this time I shall have been missed and they will be looking for me. You haven't a chance of getting away."

Lesset considered this in silence for a moment, then he shook his head. "Good try, son. But my reading is that only you and Tereza know."

"Tereza!"

Lesset nodded gently. "Don't get excited. We've got her as well. She won't be hurt. Maybe Quisto knows—but he's at sea."

"You'll never get away." He was obstinate, dour, hating the confidence this man showed, and frantically worried now about Tereza.

"We will. This is a bad moment; but not

Continued on page 28

Reg Dixon, clown who laughs last

by JOHN ENNIS

Behind the witless smile and vacant gaze is a painstaking man with a simple secret. He finds it fun to be a perfect fool

NEARLY THREE YEARS AGO, Reg Dixon, a soft-voiced, heavily built comedian, took a telephone call at Hastings, where he was playing to sparse April seaside audiences. It was an urgent call from London. Emile Littler, one of Britain's leading impresarios, wanted Dixon to take over the ailing George Formby's part in *Zip Goes A Million* at the Palace Theatre, London.

Meekly, Dixon listened; then he gave his answer. "I'm sorry, Mr. Littler, I can't do it. I'm going on my holidays next week."

"Reg—do you realize what you're saying?" Littler demanded.

"Yes, I've bought my tickets," said Dixon.

The showman gave a tolerant sigh. "Will you understand that I am offering you the biggest chance of your life—as a star in the West End? I'll ring you again in an hour."

The hour gave Dixon time to appreciate that the job he was being offered was more important than his holiday. When Littler telephoned again he immediately accepted.

"I am not a very quick thinker," he confessed recently to an acquaintance. "People sometimes take me for being rather foolish." They are encouraged in this belief by his innocent smile, his candid gaze and the unsophisticated gags he tells on the stage in his slowly spoken Midland accent.

His slow, steady thinking, however, generally helps Dixon to make correct decisions. In five years he has forced up his salary for a week in variety from £45 to between £600 and £1,000, and he has appeared in two Royal Command performances. Last summer he employed one hundred people in shows that he and his agent, Cecil Buckingham, put on at seaside theatres.

Dictates Songs To Pianist

Dixon owns a farm in Warwickshire, where he has turned a sixteenth-century half-timbered farmhouse into a luxurious modern dwelling for himself and his Austrian wife, Lisa. The farm, stocked with pure-bred Friesian and Ayrshire cattle, is a paying concern. With Buckingham he owns a music publishing business through which he publishes the songs he writes. Now, after discussions with Tom Arnold, another impresario, he is writing the script and music for a West End show, with himself as the star.

"He has the ability to close his mind and concentrate on one problem to the exclusion of everything else," says his manager, Norman Fellows. His pianist, Maurice Arnold, points out that this ability makes Dixon the fastest song-writer he has met in thirty years as a musician. "He hums tunes and I write them down," says Arnold: "It's like a man dictating a letter to his secretary."

Dixon's apparent naïvety exasperates some people and arouses in others the desire to help him. During the war, after he had been only a few weeks in the Royal Air Force, a squadron-leader decided that Dixon would be of most use to the service if he were kept at the training centre to take charge of the camp theatre. To make sure he would not be posted from the camp, Dixon was put on a course to turn him into a corporal drill instructor.

The martinet warrant officer in charge of the course glared when he saw the rawness of this recruit. "Have you been sent here because you will make an efficient n.c.o., or because you do fan dances in the Naafi?" he demanded. Later the warrant officer was awarding points for neatness on a kit inspection. With hardly a glance as he swept by Aircraftman Second Class Dixon's perfectly neat layout he snapped: "Minus two."

Could Not Find His Rifle

For the first morning's parade, Dixon could not find his rifle. Trembling—for he had heard that the penalty for such an offence was terrible—he joined the ranks without his weapon. Because all the others were holding rifles, he held his empty right hand in a position that matched theirs as the warrant officer moved along the ranks making an inspection.

When he came to Dixon, his expressionless gaze fell on the empty hand. Gently he reached out his own hand, palm downward, and passed it just above and below Dixon's hand, as if to ensure that his eyes were not lying, and that there really was no rifle there. Then, placing his face within an inch of Dixon's, he roared: "Where's your rifle?"

Dixon fled to his hut for another desperate search, and found the rifle. It had slipped behind some steam pipes. He ran back with it—to be sent off parade in disgrace. Still carrying his rifle, he sought out the kindly squadron leader. "Never mind," said the officer. "We'll wait until that warrant officer goes on leave and put you on the course under another man." This was done, and Dixon became an efficient drill instructor. Later, as a flight sergeant, he was put in charge of one of the R.A.F. Gang Shows, which he took 30,000 miles to entertain half a million servicemen in twenty-nine countries.

With Dixon's slow-tempo approach to life goes a tenacity that often gets him his own way while others are still arguing. Some time ago a northern comedian claimed that the catchphrase, "I've been proper poorly," was his property, and he persuaded the Variety Artists' Federation to order Dixon to stop using these words. Dixon pointed out that he had used the phrase as a boy to try to get out of going to school. He ignored the attempted ban, and still says, "I've been proper poorly" on every stage appearance.

Dixon's first big chance came in 1949, when he was appointed resident comedian to the radio programme *Variety Bandbox*. At that

Taking over from George Formby, Dixon played Sarah Gregory. Throughout the show, he wore

time his pay for a week in variety was £50. Six months earlier he had written a comic song called "Confidentially." He wrote a more serious set of words to the same music, and used the song as his signature tune. "I had written a hundred songs and tramped round publishers' offices with no result," he says. "After I had sung 'Confidentially' three times on the air, a dozen publishers asked for it." Later the song was sung by Sophie Tucker, Maurice Chevalier and Danny Kaye. After three months in *Variety Bandbox* Dixon was booked for the Palladium at £200 a week.

Turned Radio Series Down

Though radio gave him this break, the hard business sense that he conceals behind his artless manner has led him since to turn down offers of radio series, on the grounds that too many broadcasts can reduce his curiosity value in the provincial theatres where he can earn large sums. A few weeks ago he refused to take part in a broadcast after he heard that he was expected to make fun of Lady Godiva and his home town, Coventry. "He turned down a good fee," says Cecil Buckingham. "But he refused to be funny at Coventry's expense."

Dennis Main Wilson, producer of the B.B.C. show *Top Of The Town*, in which Dixon has appeared, says: "Reg has a lazy manner but he is a hard worker and a dreadful worrier. He takes tremendous pains to make sure that every line of every gag is just as he wants it."

After his first night in *Zip Goes A Million*, Dixon was almost in despair as critics and other

the lead part in *Zip Goes A Million*, with Barbara Perry (left) and the tiny hat he insisted on choosing at his demobilization centre

Dixon rode this horse along Rotten Row as a publicity stunt. But he is genuinely fond of animals; he owns a farm stocked with pedigree cattle

visitors crowded his dressing-room to drink his champagne and offer congratulations. "They all looked so sympathetic that I was sure I had flopped," he recalls. Not until he saw the next day's newspapers carrying headlines such as ZIP GOES REG DIXON did he stop worrying.

On the night of the 1952 Royal Command Performance he feared he would not be able to arrive at the London Palladium in time after he had finished for the night in *Zip Goes A Million*. He persuaded a friend, an expert motor-cyclist, to take him by pillion from one theatre to the other. "We hurtled through the Oxford Street traffic at a terrific speed," says Dixon. "A pedestrian crossed in front of us and the rider stood straight up on his brakes. I had half an hour to spare when I arrived and I needed every minute of it to stop trembling."

His first stage job, when he was nineteen, was as a singer of duets with a pianist named Scott. They had a contract for £1 a week between them, plus a share of the profits at Aberdour, in Scotland. There were no profits, and the whole cast was starving. To earn the price of a meal Dixon and his partner sang on a nearby beach for pennies; but the idea of taking coins from children worried him, and they gave up after one day.

In return for repairing a motor-boat, they were allowed to take people for trips round Largo Bay for 4d. There were no customers, so they filled the boat with penniless members of the cast. Just as they were about to set out for a non-profit-making joyride a woman came aboard. "We had to pretend to collect the fare from all the others just to get her fourpence," Dixon recalls.

For five years before the war Scott and Dixon toured Scottish theatres. "Some of the audiences were so tough that the stage was protected with wire netting to catch missiles," says Dixon. "One night a man leaned over and hit the orchestra conductor on the head with a bottle. I remember we were singing 'Live And Let Live' at the time."

In spite of his stage experience in this duet act, he admits that until he joined the R.A.F. he was terrified at the idea of standing alone on a stage and telling jokes. With other recruits at Cardington camp he watched amateurs doing turns in the Naafi. Because the audience seemed tolerant he took a chance and told some gags. He soon had the canteen rocking with laughter.

The Officer Said Nothing

After years with the Gang Show his diffidence had evaporated. When he was collecting his civilian clothing at the demobilization centre he decided to find a property for his act. Asked "What size hat?" he replied: "Six and a half." In silence the issuing sergeant handed him a tiny hat. Dixon squashed it into a weird shape, put it on his head and smiled his most vacant smile into a mirror. "That's fine," he remarked, and walked away.

At the exit an officer was shaking hands with each man and wishing him luck. Dixon still wore his hat as the officer spoke to him. "He made no remark," Dixon recalls. "But I could see he was wondering what kind of a creature the R.A.F. was releasing on civvy street."

Reg Dixon was born in Coventry in 1915. His mother, a midwife who now owns a Coventry maternity home, says, "He has always been lazy. He has to work hard now, but he has never been very willing."

Switched Off Too Soon

His first job was with the watchmaking firm of Williamson's, in Coventry, where one of his duties at the end of each day was to throw a switch that cut off all the machinery worked by eight thousand people. One evening, anxious to see a football match, he switched off five minutes early, losing the firm 666 man-hours. He was indignant when the foreman fired him. "It was only five minutes," he complained.

"I think I really must have been naïve in those days," he says now. "Once when a foreman said to me, 'Get your coat on,' I said, 'Why? I'm not cold.'"

Today, Dixon has an explanation for the apparent contradiction in his character. "I probably give people the wrong impression," he says. "I think I lead them up the garden. I see an expression come over a fellow's face as he talks to me and I think, 'He really does think I am a bit silly.'"

Dixon tolerates being taken for a fool. "But," he says, "a lot of smart people get a shock when they have made their own plans, basing them on the fact that I am a fool. Often I feel quite sorry for them, and it is a terrible effort to disillusion them." THE END

Mr. Bridge sweeps away centuries of cobwebs

by JOHN HARMAN

When they give an old church a wash-and-brush-up, Kirkland Bridge's men may uncover anything from wasps to poison gas

ON A COLD November afternoon, Kirkland Bridge, a stocky, quietly spoken North Countryman who is one of Britain's church renovation experts, paced up and down the nave of a church in Halifax. He believed he was alone in the building, but as he walked, turning over colour schemes in his mind, he heard slow, cautious footsteps in the loft forty feet overhead. He stood still. The footsteps stopped. When he moved, they started again.

Suspicious now, he remembered that a maniac was terrorizing Halifax by waylaying victims in lonely parts of the town. Hearing the footsteps quicken, he ran down the nave and reached the foot of the loft ladder in time to see a pair of trousered legs descending towards him. He braced himself for a struggle, but the next moment was face to face with—a verger.

As managing director of Kirkland Bridge Church Restorations, Ltd., fifty-six year old Bridge has 18,000 places of worship on his list of prospective clients, and usually visits one every day. He travels more than a thousand miles each week. "Occasionally I sleep in monasteries," he says. Recently he dined with a group of white-robed friars, and throughout the meal the refectory listened in silence to a friar reading aloud—from a book on cricket.

To negotiate contracts, he calls on deans and parish priests. Mavis Sach, his twenty-four year old deputy, who sometimes goes with him to business interviews, reckons that her most unusual meeting with a client was in a convent which had shut itself off from the outside world.

Prioress Hidden By Veil

"The reverend mother prioress wanted to have her chapel redecorated," she says. "For the interview, we were shown into a barely furnished room which was divided across the middle by a row of prison-like bars. Only when heavy shutters and curtains on the far side of the bars had been drawn aside did we see the reverend mother. Even then, a black veil covered her from head to foot."

Parish churches and chapels, of which Bridge claims to have restored more than a thousand, provide the bulk of the firm's orders, but his teams of craftsmen, averaging eight men each, also tackle some of the world's biggest jobs of cleaning and renovation. They have worked in the cathedrals of Norwich, Manchester and Londonderry.

The firm's scaffolding towers can be taken down when a church is needed for special services, but wedding couples usually ask the team to leave them in position during the ceremony. "They like to remember that the church was being redecorated on the day of their marriage," says one of Bridge's staff.

Insurance premiums for church restorers are high, and safety precautions, laid down by the Board of Trade, are strict. Workers on overhanging clocks and similar exposed points wear leather safety-belts. Those engaged on interiors must tie the bottom rungs of high ladders to pillars or pews. Bridge learned the value of this precaution in a church at Harrow. He arrived at half past seven in the morning, before the team working on the contract, and out of curiosity decided to climb a sixty-foot ladder which led to an open trap-door in the ceiling.

When he was ten feet from the top, the ladder began to slip across the marble floor. Cat-like, he scampered up to the trap-door. There he sat and waited for the team. "Once on the ground, I made myself climb the ladder again immediately. If I hadn't done so, I might have lost my nerve."

To show prospective clients what happens

Through a pair of powerful binoculars, Kirkland Bridge inspects the roof and architraves of Saint Dominic's Roman Catholic Church, at Hampstead

Bridge's men have moved out. Now, with Father Prior, he discusses the finished job at Saint Dominic's. It's impossible to follow set rules for colour schemes, he says

when walls are cleaned after centuries of neglect, Bridge rubs sample patches with his pocket-handkerchief. Dirt often hides fine stonework, but steam hoses cannot be used to remove it because of condensation, and acid solutions eat into the stone. Bridge now uses an abrasive made of powdered pumice stone, which cleans the stone and leaves it unharmed. In one church, he recalls, several pillars became darker instead of lighter after scrubbing. They were found to be made of metal moulded to imitate stone.

"Unfortunately for us, a number of churches have no piped water supply," says Bridge. "Buckets have to be carried from neighbouring houses, wells and pumps. When we cleaned the west exterior of Norwich Cathedral, and had to spray it with thousands of gallons an hour to dislodge the dirt, the local authorities opened a nearby main for our benefit."

Bridge begins his inspection of a church by lying on his back to study the ceiling through powerful binoculars. "If congregations could see the 'black snowfall' of dust in dim recesses, on beams, rafters and the tops of capitals and along arches, they would think twice about sitting under them."

He usually lies on a pew for ceiling inspections. One morning, he had just started the examination when a woman worshipper, thinking the church was empty, entered and began praying a few rows behind him. Suddenly, Bridge sat up. "The poor woman was so astonished that she screamed," he recalls.

For some time, Bridge has been searching London for a disused church to convert into a showroom in which to demonstrate colour schemes. The replacement of crude reds and other Victoriana with more pleasant and subtle shades can give an old building serenity and spaciousness, he maintains. "Pink is the most practicable colour for churches in smoky towns. When dirty, it looks much better than cream.

"The sanctuary should contrast with the rest of a church, so that the eye is attracted towards it, but otherwise it's impossible to lay down rules for colour schemes. No two churches are the same. Every job has to be tailor-made." In Wolverhampton he put a plank across some pews and mixed bowls of paint for a day and a half before deciding on a shade of blue. Colour-cards are misleading when planning church redecoration. Shadows make the colours on curved parts of high ceilings seem deeper. "The only way to let clients choose a colour is to paint sample areas."

About sixty men apply to Bridge for jobs each year. They are expected to know, or be willing to learn, not only painting, distempering and plastering, but also vacuum-cleaning and the washing of windows, floors and statues. Ex-sailors are among the best recruits. They are used to being away from home for long periods, and can climb and handle ladders—a talent vital in church restoration. "A stumble," says Florence Lindsay, Bridge's accountant, "might send a ladder crashing through a priceless stained-glass window. Newcomers to the firm are surprised to hear that foremen inspect teams before work. A neatly turned out team is a good advertisement, and we insist that men arrive each morning freshly shaved, with hair brushed and boots polished."

In the interests of worshippers who use churches between services, no whistling, singing or shouting is allowed on the job. When a man on the scaffolding wants to attract the attention of a colleague on the ground, he claps his hands. Smoking is prohibited; one employee spotted with a cigarette in his mouth was sacked instantly.

In spite of the restrictions, most men stay on to develop a craftsman's pride in jobs which are likely to outlast their own lifetimes. Teams travelling from one contract to another frequently break their journeys to revisit churches they had renovated years previously.

Sold Vacuum Cleaners

It was just after the first World War that the job of cleaning churches appealed to Kirkland Bridge as an unusual career. Deciding not to return to his native Lancashire after army service, he worked as a vacuum cleaner salesman in London. When a customer happened to remark that churches seemed dustier than houses, he gave up his job, bought one of his employer's machines for £6—his week's wages—and began to vacuum altar carpets.

As he widened his interests to include general church cleaning and redecorating, he quickly discovered that many churches lack funds for restoration. "When this is the case, I organize appeal campaigns. Any church authority, if it is really determined, can raise money by such means as sales and door-to-door collections."

Bridge's clients are often startled by his high-speed business methods. In his Hampstead office, where he has two red telephones on his desk and a large map with flags pinpointing inquiries on hand, he keeps a register of important church officials of each denomination. The thousands of names and addresses, he explains, are invaluable for publicity campaigns. When a Catholic priest wrote to commend his work, he posted copies of the letter to all other Catholic priests within a few hours.

Unexpected hazards met by Bridge's teams have included a loft full of poison gas, caused by lead roofing lying on a certain kind of timber. The men had to be equipped with gas-masks. "In a church in Harpenden, Hertfordshire," says Leslie Johnson, Bridge's travelling supervisor, "a secret panel flew open while I was examining an altar screen. The recess behind it contained important church records which had long been regarded as lost."

Angel Had Bagpipes

Among discoveries in other churches were a wasps' nest, churchwardens' clay pipes and, at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, a mysterious wooden carving on the ceiling which, after cleaning, proved to be a representation of the Devil with his tongue sticking out. When cleaning the walls of Manchester Cathedral, one of the teams found eight life-size statues of angels which had been hidden by dust for years. The angels were playing musical instruments—one had a set of bagpipes.

According to Bridge, however, the strangest incident in his firm's history occurred in a Roman Catholic church in Middlesex. "The men were having their lunch-break and the foreman had stayed behind in the church to look after the equipment. He heard the huge west door open and slam. Then followed the sound of someone walking down the nave towards him. But the church was deserted. The same thing happened a week later, and again a week after that.

"An explanation of these events was given by the reverend father: 'If you notice anything unusual,' he said, 'please don't worry. This church is haunted by my predecessor. He died a few years ago.'" THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURENCE HANLEY

A merry Christmas!

but HOW WILL YOU BE FEELING THE DAY AFTER?

TAKE

Beecham's Pills

–and you'll be feeling fine!

NORMAN WATSON WINS A FORTUNE FROM FUN AND GAMES

Continued from page 9

were so alike you'd swear they had collaborated. Whether there's anything in telepathy, I still don't know."

Watson, who chain-smokes his way through the trade's peak season from mid-June to the Christmas rush, had the problem of amusing British families assigned to him as a boy.

His father, Victor Hugo Watson, was foreman-lithographer for John Waddington in the early 1900s. The business was in low water in 1911, and Watson obtained permission to take over the administration for three weeks. Waddington's soon became the biggest theatre printers in the country, and Watson was made managing director.

Father Was Too Busy

One day in 1920, when the elder Watson was sitting in the Savage Club in London, he was approached by a Fleet Street reporter, David Whitelaw. "I've just invented an amusing word-game called Lexicon," said Whitelaw. "Why don't you manufacture it?"

Watson brought it back to Leeds and turned it over to his young son. "See what you make of it," he said. "I'm too busy."

By the time Victor Watson died, in 1943, his son had experimented with a line of two dozen old family games, refined some new ones, expanded the business into five printing plants and was selling Lexicon in French, Dutch, Hebrew, German and Afrikaans.

He had snapped up the British rights on Monopoly, the biggest money-maker of them all, and was eagerly tracking down anything that looked like an innovation.

Norman Watson reckons that he has played Monopoly, Lexicon and Cluedo, his three star contributions, at least two thousand times each in order to know them well enough to call himself an authority. "Three other games were moderate successes," he recalls, "and one was a flop."

The failure had the intriguing name of "Striptease." Watson says: "Artistically, it was so refined that it misled us. It met with severe disfavour from a considerable number of shocked vicars. We had to take it off the market."

At board meetings, he soon found himself analysing the success of every game, from Monopoly to tiddleywinks. Watching children playing in the streets of Leeds, he became the chief exponent of simplicity in family games. During one meeting he proved his point by taking on all his directors in a two-hour battle of wits that probably marked the first time a group of big businessmen ever assembled to play Hunt The Thimble.

Doodles New Designs

Family games for Watson have become a serious business. He rarely takes a holiday from them, and even when he is talking on the telephone the doodles on his desk blotter generally look like designs for playing-boards.

Watson supervises new games, from the testing of the rough idea—which he often plays so many times that he begins to imagine he invented it himself—until it finds its way to the family circle. All the time he is playing—with anyone from a sceptical director to a nervous printer's apprentice—he takes notes, recording enough combinations to be able to say how many parts will be needed.

Counters, cards, score-sheets, the minimum requirements to set up a "bank" and the average length of a game are among the first problems. Once he has an idea of the component parts, he begins to translate his desk-blotter doodles into rough sketches of playing-boards.

His sketches are turned over to a staff of fourteen artists in Leeds who design the box, counters and pieces, and any other components that may be necessary.

The British Industries Fair, in May, is an important day in the family games business. Most new games are introduced then, and the probable popularity of an item can be gauged by the dealers' interest.

The accumulation of the hours Watson has spent playing games, writing rules and learning combinations of play has given him an odd conception of the business-pleasure relationship. He plays with such seriousness that he now considers paperwork and correspondence a pleasure.

Thirty Ideas A Day

Constance Vevers, his private secretary, bears the brunt of what Watson calls "the postal traffic." As many as thirty packages a day come in from all over the country. Most contain home-made cut-outs of crudely conceived games that Watson describes as "over-complicated, too topical to be sound, unreasonably expensive to produce and, what's worse, unoriginal."

The elder Watson once dispatched his son to London to teach Lexicon to an elderly man of eighty-one and his three sisters. "They were all deaf," Watson says, "and I came out of there knowing once and for all the nature of absolute patience."

Once, a middle-aged woman burst into Watson's office, swept the papers from his desk and set down a draughts board. Then she began to explain a game she had invented. It involved the clothing and unclothing of carved figures. When Watson had recovered his composure, he pointed out some obvious objections. The woman retorted gleefully: "That's just it. You could call it Nudists and Prudists."

Since it usually takes three months to design and produce a game and another three to distribute it, the profits do not depend on how many are sold but, as Watson says, "on how many you are left with when the novelty wears off."

Shortly after the war, he read a news item about an Austrian who claimed to have invented a five-suit pack of cards to play a more complex game of bridge. Twenty-four hours later, one of Watson's men had flown over and bought the rights. Just as the cards reached the dealers, Watson realized that the novelty would be short-lived. There were too many cards for a player to handle at once. He stopped production and sold the last of his stock. He was a jump ahead of the public.

Like his father, he is willing to assess a game's possibilities by his son's reactions. On that day in September when a young man brought in a flat box wrapped in newspaper and turned it over without ceremony, Watson took it to Brownberrie End, his Leeds home. His ten-year-old son was in bed. "Come on, Johnny," he said, "let's try this one out."

Within ten minutes he saw a look of absorption and excitement on John's face and interpreted it as just the right proportion of skilful play and pure luck. He lost the game to his son ("I'm getting old for these things now"), but happily went back to the office, locked the box in the safe, and spoke a long description of the game into the dictaphone. The next day his solicitors turned it into a provisional patent.

When Trouble Starts

British families buy more than twelve million games a year. Just under half of these are the products of Norman Watson. He may gross more than a million pounds this year, but when the air of secrecy lifts and his trump card reaches the market shortly after the British Industries Fair, his troubles will begin.

Scores of people will complain that the rules are not clear. Half a dozen letters a week will contest the patent. Cranks and fortune-hunters will claim that they invented the game years ago and submitted it to Waddington's without success. If the game fails, months of research and a small fortune will be lost in the gamble. And if it is a hit, a hundred people a day will be spurred on by the slimmest chances of wealth and fame to send their wildest inspirations to Waddington's.

Watson finds it a source of his greatest amusement. He has learned that it's all in the game. THE END

THE CHRISTMAS CRUISE OF FATHER JEROME

Continued from page 8

his divided conscience still pricked him. Three turkeys and one case of rum. He was glad the Portuguese camp cook possessed a soft heart and forgiving disposition.

Tide and wind were kicking up an ugly cross-sea off the tip of the point. Father Jerome ate a one-handed supper of corned beef and pilot bread at the wheel, his eyes straining to pierce the gloom.

He was well into the crossing, Mainadieu answering sweetly as she ran north-west through the deep night of ocean, when the sea cried out to the little priest in a thin and lonely voice. Father Jerome listened, gripping the spokes hard, head tilted and lips parted to hear the better. A crester, the first, swung the boat and rumbled past her, a dark dim bulk under a livid edging of white.

The sound came again; and this time Father Jerome knew it for no cry of late-wandering gull but a hail from a human throat. His megaphone hung by the binnacle. He fought the warped wheelhouse window open. Spray drenched his face and beard as he leaned out and sent his answer braying through the horn.

The next hail came from startlingly near. He glimpsed a phantom blur, dead ahead on a collision course, and let Mainadieu fall away into the trough.

A lifeboat. It rose on the next crest and he saw the wet white faces of men. There were other lifeboats, two more, close-grouped and riding low in the sea. Each dim face turned to him was a prayer.

"Agincourt?" He flung the question through the megaphone, his heart leaping.

"Aye." The voice that blasted back at him, exhausted and sea-roughened, rang with an iron triumph. "All alive-o! How far to land?"

They'd had five days in the boats. There would be thirst and hunger and exhaustion aboard, frostbite, pneumonia more than likely. Quartz Harbour with its Red Cross outpost hospital lay across the Sound. For all his faith in Mainadieu, Father Jerome knew she couldn't make it, not in a rising gale with forty men lowering her freeboard to inches. What they needed, what they must have, and soon, was fire and food and drink.

He remembered the snug haven he had left an hour ago. Decision followed hard on the thought.

"I'll take you in tow!" he shouted. "Stand by for my line!"

It was midnight by Father Jerome's watch, and the Sound running high and angry, when he brought his flotilla around the hook of Blackfish and through the bottleneck of the cove. After the hubbub outside, the calm of the cliff-walled pocket was unearthly. But there was no time for rest. The work was only beginning.

For the next two hours, Father Jerome was utterly occupied, building fires with kindling from Mainadieu's fuel locker under loose-laid piles of wet drift, staggering with bucket after bucket of fresh water from the creek that tumbled down a rock face, pulling out to his boat again and yet again, until he had stripped her of all the scant comforts in his personal store.

Men helped him, the stronger ones, as they regained their land legs. The fires began to leap high. A time came when Father Jerome could pause to ease the stitch in his side. He looked round at seamen who stood or sat or sprawled, their drying clothes giving off clouds of steam, their bristly faces red-ruddy in the glare of the driftwood flames.

The one dangerously ill man of the crew lay between fires, wrapped in Father Jerome's blankets. Pneumonia, the Agincourt's skipper feared. He lurched across the shingle to Father Jerome.

"I'd give my right arm for a couple of bottles of whisky," he said. "For one bottle, even. Just to get a spoonful between the teeth of my weakest." His grin was haggard. "Not bellyaching, mind. You've done us noble, Padre, noble. But right now I'm wishing you were a sinful man with a Christmas quart stowed in your ditty bag."

"I'm a sinful man," said Father Jerome. The sailors lying by the fires had the hard-used look of bodies washed up on a beach. He balanced Morant Construction Company's Christmas dinner against this urgent need, and saw his duty clear.

"A sinful man, Captain," he repeated, while his spectacles flashed rosy in the flame-glow. "I have not merely one bottle but two full cases. I also have twenty-seven large turkeys. Can you bear up long enough to lend a hand?"

"Why, I'll bear up for ever!" The freighter captain gripped his arm with a pressure that hurt. "You're no mortal, you're a blooming angel sent among us!"

At three in the morning, Father Jerome straightened from dumping more drift on a fire. Stayed with white meat and dark, with turkey drumsticks broiled over coals and turkey broth served from Mainadieu's washtub, warmed outwardly by fire and inwardly with rum, Agincourt's crew slumbered amid the bones of the feast.

The little priest studied the scene with a wistful eye. His own supper had been less than adequate; he could have nibbled with relish on a wing or even a neck. But no morsel of those twelve turkeys had passed his lips. If he had sinned, let that be his penance.

He had banged his knee in a tumble from a driftlog, and limped as he moved to join Agincourt's captain and first officer. They stood over the unconscious seaman. The captain listened to the laboured breathing, then turned to Father Jerome with a shake of his head.

"We may lose him," he said.

It was the simple truth. They stared all three at the form in the rough grey blankets, while the voice of the wind climbed to a banshee screech above the rock ramparts of the cove.

"There's a hospital upcoast twelve miles at Quartz Harbour," Father Jerome said slowly. "It's small, but very well equipped." He listened for a moment, then said: "We'd be running directly against the weather for half the distance. From there, Cape Orion would provide us with a lee of sorts."

The wordless prayer was in his heart again. His mouth was dry, his knees none too steady. "In view of this lad's condition," he said, "I feel justified in attempting the trip."

Agincourt's mate said quietly: "Permission to go with him, sir?" and the captain gave him a nod. "If there's phone or wireless at this place, Mr. Amodeo, you'll pass the word."

It was settled as briefly as that. With the sick man in the bottom of the dinghy and Amodeo at the oars, they pulled out to the boat. They lashed the dinghy across Mainadieu's stern, the sick man into Father Jerome's bunk. Anchor up, engine at quarter speed, they crept towards the gut of the cove.

Outside, the gale met them roaring. Spray rattled like birdshot against the wheelhouse windows.

Unbidden, the mate had settled in a watchful crouch by the engine. Father Jerome crossed himself. His hand, descending, drew the throttle to mid-quadrant. He felt Mainadieu rear like a startled horse beneath him as she rose to the first inrushing sea.

Off the tip of Blackfish Point, the wind smashed at her full force. She struggled without forward way, trapped in a hell of cross-seas between spouting reefs and open Sound. Wind slugged her again with a giant fist. Her wheelhouse windows blew inwards. Father Jerome's spectacles protected his eyes from the splintering glass and his beard saved him a cut throat. But his cheekbone tingled with a wet warmth, and his fingers came away bloody. He swivelled for an instant to see how Agincourt's young mate had fared. From his crouch by the engine, Amodeo flashed him a white grin.

They fought inch by inch clear of the tide rips. Father Jerome notched his throttle back to half speed. If his boat were to live he must hold her to the rhythm of the seas, never trying to drive her over their summits but letting them lift and toss her and slide by beneath her hull.

Time lost meaning for Father Jerome. It could have been minutes later, or hours, when he saw the first of the mid-Sound waves seething down towards them. The king wave brought a wind of its own. Its spray was thrown before it, filling the air, blinding the little priest's eyes. Mainadieu's bows were lifting, she was scrambling up the breakneck slope like a cat up a wall. She poised with the white avalanche of the crest crumbling around her, then toboganned down the other side. The trough received her. The following sea, jackal on the heels of a lion, pounced square upon her.

Half strangled, fists locked around the spokes, Father Jerome withstood the press of solid water. The mission boat rose sluggishly from under her load to squatter in a field of foam. A pulse familiar to the priest as the beat of his own heart was missing. Mainadieu's drowned engine had stalled.

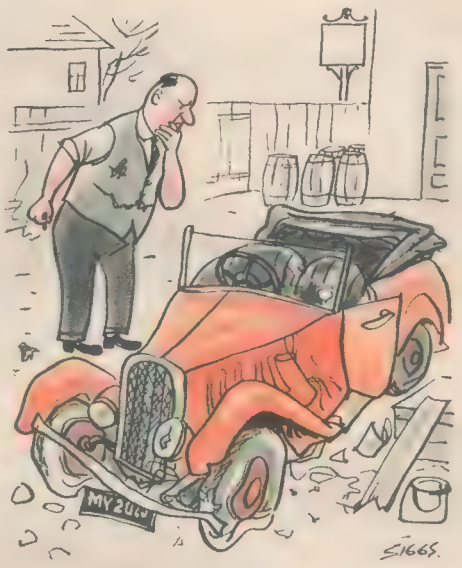
They lay, half swamped, in a quiet all but supernatural. It was the lull between sets of seas—the phenomenon which, in the days of his Atlantic boyhood, Father Jerome had heard fishermen call a "slatch." They must use it or die.

He rushed aft, hooking a line from the gear locker as he passed it. Amodeo was working desperately over

Consider your verdict

by

RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B.



Emily was driving along in her neat second-hand sports car one day when the steering failed. She managed to pull up without accident, and phoned for a breakdown lorry.

When she discovered how much repairs would cost, she was downhearted. "I can't possibly afford that," she said, "you'd better take my car round to the Rose and Crown. I keep it there."

George, the innkeeper who let Emily keep her car in his yard for a shilling or two a week, was sympathetic about the whole affair. "I'll tell you what," he volunteered, "while your car's laid up, you can leave it here for nothing."

After another six months, Emily moved from the district. Before she left, she told George that she would return soon to do something about the car. By this time, it was no longer licensed, and the battery was completely useless.

After three years, George had still not heard from Emily. Trade at the Rose and Crown was improving, and customers were beginning to complain that Emily's rather forlorn little car made parking in the yard difficult. George had no idea where Emily and her family were, and when he inspected the car he found that it was not roadworthy, and that various parts had rusted up.

But he decided to have the necessary repairs done. He spent £85 on having the car repaired, and put it up for sale at an auction. It fetched £100, so that George made a profit of £15 for all his efforts. He was satisfied, in spite of the fact that the actual market value at the time was £120.

A few weeks later, Emily turned up. She was furious to learn that her car had been sold. George offered to hand over the £15, but she refused. She sued him, alleging that he had done wrong by assuming control of her property and "converting" it to his own use. If he had been foolish enough to spend money on her car without her consent, that was his loss. She wanted the full market value of her car, including repairs.

George defended himself strenuously. He had acted out of necessity, he said. Emily's own actions had forced him to dispose of the car. She was lucky that he had not sold it as scrap for a mere £5.

What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, see page 25

the engine. Father Jerome made his line fast around a slat in the last of the turkey crates, hurling it over the side as a sea anchor.

No orders were given, none needed. Father Jerome found his spare set of sparking plugs while Agincourt's mate swabbed with a fistful of miraculously dry waste at the ignition wires. Skinned knuckles were added to the cheek gash when Father Jerome straightened.

"Ready here," Amodeo snapped to him. He jammed his thumb on the electric starter. The engine caught . . . on the first revolution. *Gloria Domino*, it caught. Mainadieu plodded up on her sea anchor, and Father Jerome flipped the line free.

The Lord had preserved them, making calm the face of the waters in that place and for those few seconds. The next wave, it seemed to Father Jerome, was shorter in the tooth. As it swung them he caught, distant still and half obscured, the wink of the five-second light beneath Cape Orion.

After a while Amodeo came forward to stand by him. They smiled at each other wordlessly, and when the young man reached for the spokes, Father Jerome surrendered his wheel without protest.

He was loading damp tobacco into his pipe when they picked up the late lights of Quartz Harbour.

"I've a mystery to solve," he said out of prolonged thought. "My son, if you were required to extract liquor from a case without opening it . . . I don't seek this information for my own use, you understand . . . just how would you proceed?"

Amodeo chuckled. "Easy, sir," he said. "That longshore stunt has barnacles on it. You slam your case a few times into a copper or washtub or something of the sort. The bottles break, your seals aren't torn, and you've got a tub of the stuff!"

THE drizzling day was past noon when Father Jerome jogged down from the hospital to the Mainadieu. The sick man would live. Dr. Bernstein had told him so over breakfast, and for that he was grateful. But he found little else to cheer him. The sea that had all but pounded Mainadieu under had reduced the last case of rum to a litter of broken glass and a bar-room reek which would haunt her for many a day. From the wreckage, Father Jerome had recovered two battered and sodden turkeys. Those birds, strung by their necks to dry above the stove, were all that remained of the thirty committed to his stewardship. In a matter of hours he must face Morant Construction Company's cook and 120 turkey-hungry men.

The sight of Galway Girl and Gypsy Rose, plodding back like repentant sinners from picking up Agincourt's crew, lightened his mood only for the moment.

Sighing, he ducked below. A small girl stood with her back against the cabin bulkhead. Her hair, dangling round her ears, was a tawny tangle, and her blue jeans were patches over patches. Like a shawl tugged around her, she wore a man's rainproof coat. It bulged in the middle; and from it dangled a pair of scaly yellow turkey legs.

"I guess you'll take me up to the p'liceman." Her voice quavered, but it held a note of defiance, too. "Well, I don't care! My dad's got both legs in plaster casts and we've been eating clams for weeks, and tomorrow's Christmas, and . . . and. . . ."

Her voice lost its defiance. The enormous blue eyes overflowed. Stricken and bewildered, Father Jerome fumbled for his handkerchief.

"There, there now," he soothed her. "I don't think this is a matter for the police." He had identified the child vaguely as one of the sprawling Blenkinsop family from the beachcombers' float camp across the harbour. "And as a Christmas feast, clams do leave something to be desired."

A smile crept into the youthful eyes behind the silver-rimmed spectacles. It would require a miracle such as that of the loaves and fishes to rescue him from his predicament, he thought wryly; and if the Lord were disposed to work a miracle, He could manage as well with one bird as two.

"Keep the turkey, my dear," he said kindly. "Advise your mother that soaking may be needed to remove the salt. Now, if we both hunt about, we may find a few cranberries."

The tears ceased. The pointed face was radiance distilled.

"Mister," the little girl said, "you're nicer than anybody. I'll bet even that tough cook at Morant's would like you!"

"But, my child, Manuelo isn't tough. He's one of the kindest of men."

"Not old Manuelo. He left. There's a terrible man now called Eckerman, but we call him Morant's Monster."

She whisked out of the cabin and into the skiff that rode by Mainadieu's quarter. Father Jerome answered her "Merry Christmas, Mister!" with a croak.

The tempter was busy at his ear, urging him to bypass the construction camp, push on to Christmas Mass and Christmas feast with Chief Saul's band at Aragon Reserve. It would be a month before the cook at Morant's learned what had befallen his supplies, and time might cool his wrath.

Then, determinedly, he set his boat in motion. He had undertaken a mission, and come what may, it would be fulfilled.

Tide still growled through Yalquitz Rapids as they rounded the rock spit of Klatawa Island. With an hour to wait for low-water slack, Father Jerome laid his half-wrecked boat against a rock ledge and hopped ashore. He chose a thrifty young hemlock, felled it and dragged it down to the cove. Troubles or no, tradition must be observed. Mainadieu would sail into Christmas Eve as she had always done, with a Christmas tree at her peak. He wreathed the hemlock with an ancient string of lights, ran an extension from the doghouse, and lashed his little evergreen to the masthead. But when he screwed the key bulb tight, the string failed to light up. Burned out—and he carried no spare globes.

NOW, the rain was over, the water bright in the early dusk, but the beauty of the cove woke no answer in Father Jerome's spirit. He brooded in the cabin, cold pipe in his fist; and was huddled so when his ears caught the gentle scuff of a hull against Mainadieu's flank. Sighing, he got up and went topside. "Welcome," he called.

"It's me, Father," a heavy voice answered. "Johnny Starr from Seahost."

"Your wife is with you?" It surprised him that this young Indian couple whom he had married a year ago should be so late abroad, and in a dugout canoe. Mostly, these days, native families travelled by motorboat.

"We got trouble," Johnny Starr told him. "My troller's gone. We was heading down to Quartz Harbour hospital and we sprung a fuel leak and it exploded. I just barely got Louisa into my tender."

In his soft voice, pride overrode distress. "Hey, Father, we got a baby! Born right here in the *canim*! Everything's fine, only I doubt it's good for them to travel farther tonight."

"Come aboard," said Father Jerome. "I've room for you, my children."

It was full dark when he toiled up the path from Morant Construction Company's landing. Mainadieu lay at the float string, Louisa Starr and her child snug in Father Jerome's bunk, young Johnny Starr whistling as he cleaned ship, the stewpot a-bubble on the doghouse stove.

The turkey dangling by its neck from Father Jerome's fist lacked drumsticks. They, with the giblets, had gone to the pot. The camp above was lightless except for the cookhouse. Its windows glared at the mission priest like accusing eyes. He mounted the porch, reached for the spike that hung beside the great iron triangle, nerved himself, and struck. The metal rang loud as the Horn of Roland in his ears.

A heavy shuffling answered him. The door opened. The bulk that filled the doorway would have done credit to a grizzly, the meaty red face was set in a scowl.

"Wadda ya want?"

In his right hand, the cook gripped a cleaver. Wordlessly, Father Jerome extended the remains of his last turkey.

"Well?"

Father Jerome found his voice. "For you," he said. "That is, for the men. I have a young mother on board, and she hadn't eaten since morning, and. . . ."

The cook's scowl deepened. "I'd like to give 'em that bird," he growled. "Yeah, right in their ugly pusses, I would! But they ain't here. None of 'em are. They chartered two flying boats by radio-phone this morning and hauled out for Vancouver, every manjack of 'em."

"But the turkeys," Father Jerome said weakly. "I was entrusted with thirty turkeys. . . ."

"Bait," the cook rasped. "Company bait. The brains figured a bang-up dinner would hold 'em in camp over Christmas, but they don't know construction men like I do!"

A MIGHTY weight lifted from Father Jerome's spirit. The inward smile spread till it kindled his face. "At least," he said, "you'll dine well yourself, Mr. Eckerman."

"Like heck I will," the cook replied sourly. "Toss that bird in the chuck or eat it yourself, just so you get it outa my sight. I can't eat my own cooking. I'm a bundle of nerves. By the time I set down to it, my stomach is tied in a knot."

"Easily remedied," cried Father Jerome. "I'll cook the bird and you'll eat with me tonight!"

The scowl faded, dissolved in a vast and hearty grin.

"It's a deal," Eckerman said. "I'd have been out of here myself, except I got no one to go to in town. Anything you want in the cookhouse, just help yourself. Me, I'll go get cleaned up."

Striding briskly, laden with plunder, Father Jerome started down towards the floats. Tomorrow he would hold festival with Chief Saul and his band. But that was tomorrow . . . and here and now was Christmas Eve.

Johnny Starr had turned on the radio. The strains of "Adeste Fideles" came sweetly to him through still, crisp air that promised frost. And as he stepped down to the landing, the Lord sent him another miracle. The tree at Mainadieu's masthead flowered in a lovely burgeoning of red and yellow, green and orange and blue. Johnny Starr had got the lights working.

Below in the warm cabin, Father Jerome smiled down on the Indian girl. She held her child close, his head nestled into her throat. Her face was a pure oval; her eyes as she gazed up at the priest were the eyes of a dark madonna.

They were singing the carol about the donkey. The sudden tears that stood in Father Jerome's eyes were all for happiness; the music made hosanna in his heart. He was God's donkey, shabby and brown, and he was bringing Christmas home. THE END

"Do you mind speaking a little louder — I can't hear you!"

THE HUMAN MACHINE

How do you view?

SADNESS, like cheerfulness, depends on the point of view from which you look at the world. It is your own choice.

Six hundred years ago an old Icelandic writer said: "Keep aloof from sadness, for it is a sickness of the soul."

A gloomy mind aggravates misfortunes; a happy mind averts many a threatening storm.

No soul need ever be sick unless it refuses to be well.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

DETECTIVES IN KHAKI

Continued from page 14

Abbassia. Civilian cars were being reconditioned with army spares and sold at a profit. This racket disturbed King to such a degree that he went to the S.I.B. and agreed to help in their investigations. He secretly marked a civilian engine that was being reconditioned with military parts and labour. When the S.I.B. raided the workshop the engine was found. Eventually, the major in charge was tried and found guilty by a court martial.

Walker is a huge, fair Englishman whose one regret was his total inability to wear native costume well enough to be taken for an Arab. This was a minor handicap when a signal arrived from Haifa one day in 1942 asking Walker and the S.I.B. men in Aleppo to look into the buying and shipping of cattle.

Cattle Became Thinner

The army was buying cattle on the hoof from Syrian ranchers. The animals were supposed to be in prime condition and free from disease. They were driven to Aleppo, where they were weighed, and then shipped to Haifa. The S.I.B. had been called in by the military authorities in Palestine, who had detected a tremendous loss of weight between the time the animals were weighed in Syria and weighed again on arrival at Haifa.

Walker had a dark, slim lance-corporal who spoke Arabic. This investigator was fitted out in Arab costume and installed at a roadside café overlooking the weighing point outside Aleppo. He soon noticed that tired and thirsty herds arriving from the north of Syria were being fed on a diet liberally sprinkled with salt. The thirsty cattle were then provided with all the water they could absorb, and weighed in this water-logged condition. The salt and water treatment would increase their weight by as much as twenty pounds—false poundage that would, of course, disappear on the way to Haifa.

Walker and his men also caught Arabs raiding the stockyards after army inspectors had passed animals in first-class condition. The prime cattle were rustled away and sick or decrepit beasts substituted for them.

At the price of about two shillings a pound, the cattle barons had been cheating the army at a rate of several thousand pounds sterling a week. The investigation resulted in strict supervision of the cattle as they arrived to be weighed. The animals were rested twenty-four hours after arrival, and twelve hours had to elapse from the time of their last feed before they went on the scales.

Walker moved to Palestine after exposing the cattle fraud and teamed up with another Cheshire constable, David Page, to squash a similar racket in civilian transport. During the Syrian campaign, the British and Australian forces commandeered trucks and lorries of all descriptions belonging to civilians in Palestine: the owners were permitted to submit claims based on the vehicle tonnage. The paymaster's office was astounded by the flow of claims and asked the S.I.B. to check them.

Walker and Page visited all the motor vehicle licensing bureaux in Palestine and compared the information on the claims with the data in the registration offices. The results were interesting. One demand for payment for the use of a ten-ton lorry diminished into a legitimate claim for the use of a motor cycle.

Page and Walker discovered that some of the claims were made for the use of vehicles which had been on the scrap heap before the Syrian campaign began. There were even claims by civilians for the use of cars that were the property of the Palestine Police.

Arrest In Besieged City

The biggest claim fraud ever exposed by the S.I.B. was in Burma. That country was evacuated in 1942 and a group of civilian contractors filed fraudulent claims for various engineering services. Jack Ellis (now a detective inspector with the Metropolitan Police) was in charge of the investigators who traced the instigator of the scheme, a major of Indian engineers, to Imphal.

The fact that Imphal was besieged by the Japanese did not stop the S.I.B. An investigator flew in, arrested the major and brought him out for trial. Twenty-five contractors were arrested and £300,000 of the £875,000 paid out in claims was recovered. Further investigation led to the recovery of £3½ million and the stopping of payment on £27½ millions of claims.

NEXT WEEK: The detectives in khaki solve the case of the crooked colonels

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AN ENGLISHMAN IN TOWN

Continued from page 11

in the unfished places of the world."

"We take fish!" protested Munro. Red Ab was sullenly silent.

"With snares and pitchforks along the shore," Peart said, without particular condemnation. "I believe you catch fish quite large that way."

"The largest is one hundred and three pounds," O'Connell said. "And that forked in by Flexmore Munro, here."

The Englishman glanced at Munro, then back at his drink. "If fish like that are caught along the shore, fish much larger should be found in the deeps where I have been fishing."

"Why, then," asked Hiram Deyell, "have you not caught them?"

"I've wondered on that. I have been thinking perhaps I have not been using a large enough bait."

Listening to these last words, Red Ab Magee lost the look of sullenness. He stood straighter at the bar. The movement was small, but with such an air of excitement that the other Irishmen looked at him questioningly. "How big a bait have you been using?" he asked the Englishman.

"With the spoons, feathers and hooks, about three feet long."

Red Ab grinned for the first time since Milton O'Connell had told his fable of the tinker. "Not long enough," he said decisively. "Not bloody long enough!"

Suddenly the others seemed to realize that by some trick they had been lured into talking almost with politeness to the Englishman. This was brought home to O'Connell by the fact that the Metcalfes and McQuade and Fee, who had entered, now left, apparently feeling there was no prospect of major excitement to keep them there. O'Connell had been disappointed secretly in the effect of his joke about the tinker, and now, with the truculence of a man whose best effort has not been appreciated, he said: "Now that you are talking, Englishman, what have you to say to my story about the Irish tinker?"

Peart seemed to hesitate a minute, and then, as if he had argued with himself and finally decided that he no longer could remain passive and speak only of fish, he said coolly: "I suppose that the moral to be drawn is that a normal girl would find any course preferable to marrying an Irishman."

O'Connell joyfully sprang at him. Red Ab held him back, almost laughing. "You should be more civil, Englishman."

Peart finished his drink and rose. Red Ab still held O'Connell but had whispered, "Wait!" and O'Connell was still.

"You leave in the face of a fight," Red Ab said. "You are a coward, then, Mister?"

"It is not necessarily cowardice to refuse to brawl with a drunken ruffian," Peart said.

"You are a coward, it is plain," said Red Ab evenly, "and later I will prove it."

The Englishman continued towards the door.

Hiram Deyell now sprang away from the bar like a bantam rooster. "Be damned to you, sir!"

The Englishman paused in the bar-room doorway. "And the same to you, sir," he said wearily, "and to all your kind. . . ."

And when Deyell would have jumped after him, Red Ab, tense with his plan, let go of O'Connell and grabbed Deyell. "Wait, you fool!"

WITH the Englishman gone, Red Ab drew Deyell and O'Connel and Flexmore Munro away from the bar. "This is not for your ears, O'Hoolihan," he said. "Not yet."

Grinning, he began to speak, in a lower voice, to the other three. They had been drinking heavily before Peart entered, and heavier still while he was here, and they swayed a little and all began to grin as Red Ab talked. At the end they laughed with delight, and slapped each other, and then left together, crowding through the doorway into the rain, like boys bound for a wonderful prank.

O'Hoolihan was preparing to close a few minutes later, after ten o'clock, when Deyell hurried back with a pail to buy a gallon of whiskey. O'Hoolihan filled the pail, took the money, and went to bed.

In his room, Peart undressed slowly, hanging his clothes on hangers in his closet and selecting from a trunk his linen for the next day. Damned Irish! He had been warned in Toronto about them. But as he filled the big crockery basin with water from a jug on the washstand, he scolded himself, too, for rising eventually to their baiting.

As he washed, his eyes strayed to his mound of fishing equipment. He towelled himself and then slipped into a silk dressing-gown and picked up the strong, steel rod. He'd had it made in Toronto. It had taken a week, after he'd heard from an old friend, now a military aide to the lieutenant governor, that a type of fresh-water barracuda named muskellunge was to be found in the lakes of this district, and that without fishing tackle at all the Irish here caught fish up to a hundred pounds.

He fingered the oiled green cord, tested to one hundred pounds dead weight, which should be enough for an expert angler, as he was, to land a fish five times that size. He rattled the lure, wondering if it really was too small, and how long it would take to have a larger one made. Probably it couldn't be done in the few days he had left before his ship sailed for England from Montreal, the last leg of his journey home from Boxer-ridden China. He pondered, but his mind kept wandering back to the scene in the bar tonight. He should not have let himself be goaded into argument! He knew, though, that this aloof attitude, this refusal to argue, just added to his challenge to all such people as these.

He sank into an armchair and listened to the rain, wishing as he sometimes did that he had married when he was younger, so that now he would have one destination, a home, instead of a choice of destinations after England which inevitably would lead him again to outlandish parts of the world where, as here, he had to stand friendless and alone. . . .

He was almost drowsing in his chair when he was roused by a quiet tap on his door.

He rose, drew tight the cord of his dressing gown, and opened the door. The man there was Red Ab Magee, swaying only slightly.

"Yes?" Peart asked coldly.

"You really want to catch a big fish?"

"Of course."

"Come with me."

Peart hesitated. "What is your plan?"

Red Ab's eyes were merry. "If you are right, and the big fish are there, we will catch one this night, with your help."

PEART hesitated a few seconds longer, weighing the possibilities. He was aware that this probably had nothing to do with fishing and instead was a design to harm him or humble him, and yet he really didn't fear the former, and the latter was impossible.

"I have no desire to net a fish, or snare it," he said. "It is with a lure and line that I fish."

"There is no nettin' or snarin' in my plan," Red Ab said patiently. "But perhaps you do not wish to venture out and take a chance with such as us in the middle of the night?"

To Peart that was unanswerable, except in one way. "Wait for me below."

He dressed calmly and quickly, using the fresh linen he had chosen for the morning, dusting his shoes, adjusting the woollen stockings over the trousers, which buttoned just below the knee; then his jacket, buttoned carefully; finally, oilskins which reached to his ankles, with a hood which went over his head. And his only thought as he dressed for this unknown adventure was that he must not allow himself to be drawn into argument again.

He was ready. Carrying his fishing gear, he walked quietly down the creaking stairs to a dim, deserted lobby. He opened the front door of the Emerald Inn and joined the four wet men in the rain on the street. One of them held a lantern. Another carried a bundle wrapped in sacking

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Consider your verdict

IN the case on page 23, the judge said that George had no doubt acted honestly, but he had no right to do what he had done—the car was not his. But Emily could only claim the difference between the £85 spent on repairs, and the full market value of the car—£120. So she recovered £35. George was held responsible for not getting the full value of the car when he sold it. (*This is the probable verdict, based on actual cases.*)

and also a covered pail. The blacksmith, the one Peart recognized as the strongest of all, had his hands free, as did the red-haired one who had called at his room.

"This way," said Red Ab Magee. They sloshed along the route Peart took each morning towards the jetty behind the mill. Red Ab Magee ranged himself on one side of the Englishman, with Deyell, holding the lantern, on the other. Behind walked Flexmore Munro, his footsteps heaviest on the plank sidewalk, and Milton O'Connell, these two occasionally chuckling irrepressibly and murmuring together, confirming to Peart that this was no ordinary fishing trip. The village was quiet except for far-off thunder. There were no street lights. The rain had not lessened.

They turned right off the main street and crossed the wooden bridge across the river to the mill, around it to the jetty where the skiff was tied. The rain beat down steadily on the water and Peart could see no more than a few feet into the darkness of the lake.

Red Ab, beside him, turned, and said conversationally: "Put your fishing stuff over there."

Peart leaned it against the back wall of the mill.

"Flexmore!" said Red Ab.

When Peart felt the great arms grab him from behind he involuntarily shouted just once.

"Coward!" mocked Red Ab. "Shout all you will, nobody can hear from the village."

Peart stood quietly. "If it's my money you want, you Irish footpads," he said, knowing they did not want his money, "you could shoot me from behind, or cut my throat, or use some other normal Irish method. . . ."

"Shut up!" said Munro thickly.

Peart let out one further ejaculation as they loosened his oilskins and removed them, then was silent as they tore off his clothes. His tweed jacket was flung wetly into the light of the lantern, followed by his quickly soaked shirt, then his trousers; finally, shoes and underwear. He was naked, wet, trying to avoid shivering. Deyell wavered before him and Peart couldn't withstand the temptation. He suddenly pulled one foot free and shoved, and Deyell fell backwards, screaming, into the water, but the others just laughed, hauling Deyell out.

MUNRO wrestled Peart to the jetty planking and held him there, and Deyell, stamping with rage, shoved his sharp, angry face down into Peart's and said: "Now we'll show you how to catch a five-hundred pound muskie!"

"It's as you said," said Red Ab with a grin. "You been using too small a bait."

An instant later, as O'Connell opened the bundle he'd been carrying, Peart knew. In the light of the lantern he saw three big hooks, used normally for hanging carcasses in a butcher's shop, probably Deyell's, since he had seen the name on other days above the butcher's shop. Each hook was nearly two feet long, with an eye at one end and a sharp point at the other. With the hooks was a coil of strong rope.

Munro suddenly began to laugh, as if overcome by the enormity of the joke, but he did not relax his grip.

Peart, knowing he was slippery from the rain and hard to hold, harder if he struggled, thought once of making an effort to escape. They were drunk. Perhaps he could do it. Then his mind saw the picture of a long, thin, naked man running from four drunken Irishmen through the village streets. Nothing they could do would be worse than that. But he tensed as he thought of even the fish he had caught, the ones only a hundred pounds, with the huge, fierce jaws.

Deyell crouched over him, slipping the rope under him, and began to fashion a rough harness around his chest and legs, leaving his arms free.

"Don't move, now," Deyell said, "or you'll stab yourself with one of these hooks."

"And when them big fish smell blood, look out!" O'Connell said. "He'd upset the boat and get us all!"

"This fish will be stuffed and hung

"Christmas morning—no newspapers—you might at least try to doll yourself up a bit . . ."

over the bar at the Emerald Inn for all time," Red Ab Magee said. "The plaque will read: 'This fish was caught by an Englishman, who, like all his countrymen, would stop at nothing to prove he was right!'"

Deyell tied all three hooks to a free end of the rope which dangled from the binding on Peart's ankles. Peart lay still, his big nose catching the light of the lantern and shading his eyes, his face inscrutable. He was thinking of the odd motives that governed men like these, some of them at least family men and gentle with children and respected probably among their kind, who through an inherited resentment and a few quarts of whiskey would try this hard to reach a man they couldn't reach by normal means. He watched them for signs of wavering, because he was sure that the wavering would come, but he saw none of it yet.

"Ready," Deyell said.

"Into the boat with him," said Red Ab with a kind of driving savagery. Then he jumped down into the boat, and Munro lifted Peart like a faggot of sticks and handed him down. Red Ab laid him across the stern seat, his legs with the hooks on them hanging down over the side.

"Time for a drink, now, I think," Deyell said huskily. "The Englishman will need one, where he's going." He brought the pail into the lantern light, filled a cup and handed it down to Red Ab, who offered it mockingly to Peart. The Englishman took the cup and raised his head to sip the raw whiskey, then upended the cup, drank it all, looked up at Red Ab, and casually tossed the cup out into the dark water, where it sank.

"Damn your eyes!" shouted Red Ab. "That's the only cup."

"Get down and drink it like hogs," Peart said.

RED AB hit him then, a slap across the face, and jumped angrily to the platform. Peart saw the eyes of the four of them, looking wistfully at the pail of whiskey. Then Deyell moved it back from the front of the platform, out of range of Peart's eyes, and knelt swiftly by it and shoved his face into the whiskey and drank. The others followed. They were ready.

Munro went to the stern with Peart. O'Connell and Red Ab took the oars. Deyell in the bows cast off.

At first they steered gingerly in the rain-filled gloom. Here, near the mill, Peart knew, were some stumps and logs. Out farther was the channel, the deepest part of the lake, where Peart had been fishing for these five days. Peart could see the dark shore no longer. The few lights in the village were dim in the rain. He wondered if the big ones really were here. Even a blow from one of the big ones, the kind of veering strike a fish sometimes gave to stun his quarry before he took him, would be enough to kill a man. Yet he forced himself to lie still.

Flexmore Munro's roar of laughter broke the silence. He was drunker than the others, had stayed much longer leaning over the pail on the jetty. He was laughing uncontrollably, trying to stop himself, shouting: "Oh! Oh! My God, Oh! Oh!" But he kept on laughing. Then he grabbed Peart and tossed him over the side with a splash.

Peart sank immediately. He had to fight his way back to the surface, lungs straining, clenching his teeth to keep himself from shouting at this final shock.

"All right, row!" Munro was shouting. "Like the Englishman, steady strokes, keep the bait moving. . . ."

Peart felt the rope tighten around his chest as he began to move through the water. Because of the diminishing sound of oars and voices he knew Munro was paying out rope slowly. And then, nightmare, the desperate struggle to stay afloat, water in his mouth, his ears, his eyes, trying to stay up, beat the drag of the hooks.

He splashed and fought, his mouth closed stubbornly. The sound of voices and oars seemed gone entirely. He sensed dully, arms aching with ebbing strength, that he must be far behind the boat now. If no fish would take him soon he would have to go anyway, for he could no longer stay afloat. . . .

Minutes later, maybe seconds, no sense of time at all, now, there was Red Ab's voice, anxious for the first time, and not too far away, saying: "Have you heard him cry out, yet?"

There was no answer. They had heard nothing for there had been no outcry.

Then Deyell's voice came, and there was no drink or laughter in it at all now. "Holy Mary, boys," he said, "if he's drowned, it'll be murder we're up for. . . ."

Peart was weakening fast, scarcely able to raise his arms, when he felt the first quick jerk on the rope. Then he was soaring through the water, skimming it, hauled in with all the strength of Flexmore Munro's oak-tree arms. And in a daze he felt the back of the skiff bang his head, and hands reached down under his armpits and hauled him into the boat.

He sagged bonelessly to the floorboards, his head lolling forward like a dead man's, and through his watery eyes he saw the misty, white shape of his ridiculous, long, thin, naked frame, bound, with the hooks hanging at his feet. He spewed water and then first raised his eyes. For the merest instant he caught the scared anxiety in the faces of the Irishmen as it was replaced at this sign of life by something like complete bafflement when they saw that it had not been drowning after all that had prevented the Englishman from crying out for mercy.

"Do you know," said Red Ab, at last, "he's not a bad feller at all."

"He is not," said O'Connell. "I can never do anything but puke at the sight of an Englishman, but for an Englishman, this is not a bad feller at all."

PEART, then, with a great effort sat up, his thick, red hair plastered over his face, and in the light of the lantern looked at the four men. And finally, since he could think of no other course, he gave to all of them a calm and supercilious nod of greeting.

The next morning at nine the village watched for the Englishman, but he did not appear. Red Ab Magee drove his team on the dray, and Milton O'Connell broke ground for a well, and Flexmore Munro shod a horse, and Hiram Deyell led a beef to his slaughterhouse. The village noticed, perhaps, that they were less talkative than usual, but then, the word went out, they had been drinking heavily last night.

But finally the vigil ended. The Englishman entered the carriage which connected with the morning train, dressed as usual.

A bystander reported later that when the Englishman settled his bill, O'Hoolihan inquired belligerently if he'd not found the food and accommodation to his liking, since he was leaving so suddenly.

The Englishman had replied that all had been reasonably acceptable, but that he finally was convinced there were no fish worth his bother to be caught by trolling, since he had fished without success now with everything he had.

THE END

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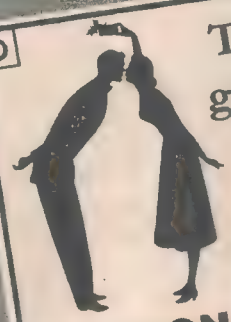

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THE MAN FROM THE TURKISH SLAVE

Continued from page 17

unplanned for. In my business it's liable to happen . . . time and chance can upset the best of us. However, once we reach the mainland we shall evaporate. Yes, son, I can read you like a book. You meant to get back to the mainland and quietly turn me in for a reward. It was bad luck for you that Anita found where you'd put the stuff."

"She pinched the whole lot."

"Sure? Let's check on that first."

Lesset said something sharply to Vasco in Portuguese.

The fisherman's hand swept forward and the great, horny palm smacked into the side of Peter's face, driving him back into a heap on the couch. He lay there with his head ringing. Lesset's voice, full of regret, came through to him.

"You'd do better to tell where it is. You're way out of your depth. Manuel's just itching to get at you and he works differently from Vasco."

At the sound of his name, Manuel grinned, his dirty, tusk-like teeth showing in a broken edge across the top of his lower lip.

Peter sat forward, shaking his head to clear it. Vasco's blow had been like a vicious piston stroke. The side of his face felt raw. He wanted to jump up and throw himself at them, wanted to hand back some of the pain and brutality he had taken . . . more than anything he wanted that, but he knew it would be stupid. They would beat him down and go on beating him until he would be glad to talk.

He looked around, seeing them and the room, all a little fogged by the haze the blow had brought over his eyes: Lesset, calmly lighting his pipe; Manuel grinning, his strong, squat hands resting on his knees, the fingers broken-nailed and each wrinkle lined with dirt; and Vasco, tall, stern, like a great pine, his long brown face wooden and severe.

LESSET moved away, unconcerned. He bent, staring into one of the wall tanks, watching the ghosts of a shoal of tiny cow-fish playing about an air-spout. A porcelain crab stalked pompously over the bottom, disturbing the mantis shrimps at their night scavenging. The single electric bulb whitened the side of his face, the face of a man who inspired confidence, of a man who could be trusted, fatherly, understanding. The directors of his firm had every confidence in Lesset. One day they would be dismayed, as a great many other people, much too late, had been dismayed, when they learnt the truth about him.

Peter, watching him, felt his anger rising. This man had come to Portos Marias and corrupted it, using his bland power of evil to draw others to him. His confident assumption of power infuriated Peter. If it was the last thing he did, he was going to tear it away, destroy it.

"Be sensible." Lesset looked towards him.

Peter stood up suddenly and nodded. "O.K. You win."

The two fishermen stepped back, Manuel sliding clumsily off the table. Lesset came forward. Another three steps and he would have been between Peter and the only other door in the room except the one which led to the outer world. It was to his right, a half-open door through which he caught a glimpse of shadowed steps rising.

Peter reached out both arms. His left hand found the pearl collar on the table and his right hand seized the bottle which stood by it. Lesset shouted and jumped for him. Peter stepped back and swung the bottle at the hanging electric lamp. With the crash of glass, he raised his foot and pushed at the table. He heard Manuel shout, and then the table and tank went over. Glass crashed again and water swirled in the darkness. Someone fell, cursed, and a hand found his ankle as he turned. He kicked out, his foot thudding into flesh. He slipped, recovered himself, heard the wet flap of curveting fish on the floor, and then was

stumbling across the room, glass grinding under his feet.

He ran for the stair door and heard the men move, heard chairs and furniture go over and guessed they were making instinctively for the outer door of the block-house. He went through the inner door, slamming it behind him, and dashed up the narrow steps. At the head of the flight it turned, and there before him was a narrow window through which the moonlight came pale and clear. Outside was a narrow alleyway running down to the town. Behind him he heard the stair door burst open and the thunder of feet on the wooden steps. He raised a foot and kicked at the centre strut of the window.

The catch splintered, glass fell with a sharp clatter into the street below and the two halves of the window flew back. He wriggled through, caught the sill for a second and then dropped.

He dropped twelve feet and his legs twisted clumsily under him as he struck the ground. He rolled over and pitched forward.

As he picked himself up, he heard Lesset shout above him. Before him the street sloped down towards the quay.

It was quieter down there now, but he could hear music and, a thick bank of cloud sliding over the moon at this moment, he saw the soft glow of lights suddenly strengthen. He had a couple of hundred yards to go and he would be safe.

A wild burst of excitement possessed him as he began to run. But even as he did so, a figure moved out into his path from the shadow of the house and he saw Assis's face clearly. He struck out, felt his fist drive against the man's shoulder and saw Assis sway backwards.

THE wall saved Assis from falling. Before Peter could pass him, he came back. This time his arm was raised and there was the sharp glint of steel from his hand.

Peter ducked, threw himself sideways instinctively and the two crashed together. An arm wound round his neck, he felt the warm, liquorish breath of Assis against his face, and they went down in a heap, the knife sliding away across the road. Peter had no idea how long they struggled, smashing and kicking at one another. He only knew that he was suddenly free, leaping to his feet.

But now there was no escape down the street. Around the corner of the block-house garden, a few yards below, came Manuel and Vasco, and from the window of the house above him he saw the clumsy figure of Lesset hanging from the sill.

Peter turned and ran uphill. He saw Lesset drop, heard his boots hit the hard ground, and then he was past him, racing upwards. Behind him came the four men.

It was only a few yards to the top of the street and then he was pelting across the fish-drying ground, ducking under the wires strung from black pole to black pole. The four were coming fast after him, Assis and Vasco ahead.

Peter went up the black funnel of a gully, past little gardens, running hard. He was in good condition and he guessed he could keep going as long as any of them. At the head of the gully, across a short stretch of close sward, he saw the long line of trees into which Anita had gone. He sprinted for them, hoping to gain their cover and work left or right and then back towards Portos Marias before the others reached the top of the gully. He was almost on their fringe when he heard a shout behind him. Assis had reached the top of the gully in time to see him disappear.

Peter crashed into the low bushes around the trees and, the ground suddenly dipping, he was sliding and tumbling down a steep slope before he could stop himself. He was brought up against a soft bank of thick myrtle shrub. He picked himself up and swung away to the right, following a narrow track.

He kept going steadily and after a time came out of the trees. To his dismay he saw that the three men had followed Assis along the fringe of the trees and were now a hundred yards below him. They were moving up after him, well strung out and less hurried, as though they knew that eventually they would run him down.

It was then that he realized the mistake he had made. Swinging right in the trees, the track had begun to rise. He had not noticed it at first, but out here on the open hillside he found himself climbing without hope of being able to turn the flanks of his pursuers. He had to keep going; his only hope was to get up near the crest of Pae and try to lose his pursuers among the slabs and pinnacles.

The night sky was banking over now with more clouds, and once, while the moon was long hidden, he made an effort to leave the path and skirt along the face of the mountain. He bore away to the left, leaping and scrambling over the broken ground, tearing his clothes and scraping hands and legs against the asperities of rock-face and boulders. But when the moon slid into sight he had only made about a hundred yards' flanking ground. Looking back, he saw that Assis had anticipated him and was already well over, climbing quickly by a smaller track that wound up the mountain.

Damn Assis, he thought. He saw Vasco in the string next to Assis suddenly throw something to his shoulder. There was a quick flirt of flame and the next instant the sharp sting of shotgun pellets bit into his legs and there was the whistle of shot through the air around him and the sharp patter as they struck at the rocky ground. He turned upwards, found a track and kept to it.

He bent forward and ran harder, determined to get farther out of range and knowing he was playing into their hands. They wanted him up on Pae, well away from Portos Marias. The shot had been intended to show him what would happen if he tried to flank them.

As he ran, his lungs heaving as the strain told, he saw the whole situation. Lesset had to keep after him. The man could not turn and go back to his boat and get away because Peter would follow him and rouse the islanders. Lesset had to get him before dawn came. When Quisto returned, he and Tereza would be missed.

MEANWHILE, behind Peter, Lesset was more distressed by his physical than mental state. Nevertheless, he managed to keep up with his party.

A few words with Assis as, from the outside, they had marked Peter's noisy progress through the wood, had settled their plans. A man who is being hunted is, so far as his direction is concerned, very much controlled by the people who follow him. He must go forward and, by edging ahead one flank or the other of the line, his path can be pushed to right or left. Peter did not realize it, but this was being done to him. The shot fired at him had brought him back to the line Lesset intended him to follow.

Hundreds of feet above them the dark, broken line of the crest was marked against the sky. Peter would hit it at a place where long ago part of the rim had broken away, leaving a narrow gap which on the crater side fell away in a sheer drop. Once on that gap, which was bounded on either side by the steep, broken faces of the rim, he would be trapped. They would come behind him and drive him forward towards the black abyss. He could turn and fight, or jump. Lesset did not mind which. If he chose to jump, then Assis would have to go down by another route and get the pearl collar. After that, they would return to the town and be off.

Ahead of him, Lesset saw Assis turn for an instant. He shouted something exultantly and pointed ahead. The moonlight showed Peter's black figure scrambling across broken, tilted strata of volcanic slabs, heading straight for the gap above him. Assis would be enjoying this, Lesset thought. He loved hunting and, blast him, he had a good wind. . . .

Peter saw the great gap in the ridge line above him and made for it. His mind was working now with a steady, comforting logic. Half the crater would be in dark shadow from the moon. The clouds were thickening and if the moonlight went altogether, everything would be in his favour. Once he got into the wild, broken ground of the crater bowl he could hide. All he needed was to get them past him; then he would turn, risk the shotgun and make his way back.

He came up on to the edge of the gap, saw the towering, unscalable black faces of the broken rim rise on his left and right, and ran forward through knee-high weeds and wind-flattened thorn bushes towards the crater. He saw the far side of the bowl, grey and silver with dark shadow markings.

As he ran, he disturbed a scraggy sheep from the scrub. It leaped ahead of him, startled. He saw it go bounding wildly forward, its thin, frightened

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bleat echoing from the high walls of the gap. Then it disappeared over the inner lip of the gap. A few seconds later he reached the point on the edge of the gap where it had disappeared. He pulled up, slipping and clutching at a clump of bushes to hold himself from going over.

He straightened up, his knees trembling beneath him. And at that moment from far below in the blackness, which seemed thick and impenetrable, came the crash of the sheep's body hitting the ground. It was a savage, soft, beastly sound, followed by the roar of sliding débris and then silence. Peter stood gasping and straining for breath, his heart thumping away and a sickness in his throat which made him giddy. Another moment and he would have been over.

The moon slid out from behind a bank of cloud. The tarn, hundreds of feet below, glittered like polished jet. Each bush and boulder was pocked with a black shadow, and the long sweeps of loose scree were speckled and ragged like the sloughed skins of snakes. From the chasm at his feet rose the bitter-sweet alarm note of a rock pipit disturbed from its night-roost by the falling sheep. The warm night air was suddenly cold on Peter's sweating skin. The whole crater was spectral, unearthly, a cold, dead stretch of unhospitable ground that might have been part of some lifeless planet.

He turned at a cry from behind him. Against the far edge of the gap he saw four figures rise, dwarflike at first, and then, taking their full height, advance slowly towards him. They walked now, strung out and barring his way back.

LESSET, as he moved slowly forward, watched Peter. It was interesting, he thought, to have forced a man into this position. What would he do? Jump, or turn and fight? Fight, he hoped; for that way he would recover the pearl collar without much trouble.

He saw Peter turn and run along the lip of the precipice towards the left-hand rim face. It won't help you, son, he thought. You can't go up and you can't go down. Peter's figure was lost in the blackness under the sheer face of the broken rim. Lesset raised an arm and signalled the line of men. They wheeled slightly and drove on towards the spot where Peter had disappeared into the shadows.

When they reached the place, Peter had gone. But they could hear him. A loose stone fell, bounding and striking against the cliff below.

Where the edge of the gap met the steep upthrust of the rim, a small ledge ran out, little more than a slightly tilted fault in the rock. Nowhere was it more than six inches wide. It curved towards an overhanging bulge of rock and disappeared. The four of them stood looking towards the bulge of rock.

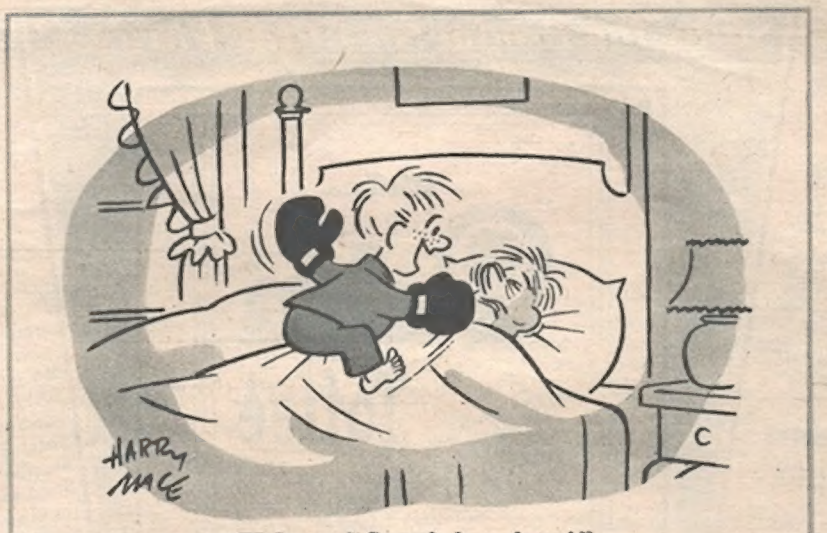
Assis said, "The ledge finishes just around the corner. There is a little place, half-shelf, half-cave. He can go no farther."

Lesset pulled an automatic from his pocket and handed it to Assis. "Try to shoot so that he does not fall outwards."

Assis hesitated, the gun in his hand. He did not like the idea of shooting a man in cold blood. He liked his quarry to be moving.

"We can't leave this island until we've dealt with him." Lesset smiled, understanding Assis and knowing the spur he needed. "Think of all the money waiting for you, Assis. You can't spend money in prison."

Assis put the gun in his pocket and began to move out along the ledge, his arms spreadeagled, his body pressed close against the rock face. He worked his way out carefully. He knew Pae well, every rock and cranny, and he treated the mountain with respect. As he passed the bulge of rock, he fumbled in his pocket for the automatic. At that moment, he felt the rockface against which he was pressed shake gently. A slow spill of dirt and small stones from above came rattling and sliding down upon him, filling his eyes with dust and beating against his face. His hand came back from his pocket, empty, and he



"Wake up! Santa's been here!"

grabbed at the rock to give himself a firmer hold.

Assis knew what was happening. For the last six months there had been these sudden small tremors. Old Pae stirring in his sleep, people said, and they paid no attention. Pae had once been a mighty volcano. . . . He still liked to remind them of his past glory.

"Assis—are you all right?" He heard Lesset call, but before he could answer there was another shake, longer this time. Assis swung his arms close about his head, shifting his grasp quickly, to protect himself from falling rocks. The mountain face seemed to judder angrily. A rock slipped from the broken outcrop above him, slid and crashed against his arm, tearing the thin shirt material and cutting into his flesh. For a moment he was almost torn from the ledge. The blood ran down his arm, but he paid no attention to it.

When his breath had evened and no other quake had come, he remembered Peter. And now there was anger in him against the Englishman. It was because of him that he had been caught out on the ledge, because of him that he had nearly been twitched off into the darkness below.

He pulled the automatic out and inched forward.

Peter was waiting for him. During the quake he had heard Lesset's warning shout and had guessed that Assis was out on the ledge after him. He, himself, had been safe, backed into the little hollow in the cliff-face where the ledge ended. A few yards from him he could see the blunt nose of the outthrust. He saw Assis's head come up over the rock and then the quick gleam of the gun. He drew back into the hollow, crouching against the side for cover.

ASSIS saw the movement and fired. The shot woke a chattering succession of echoes around the crater. The bullet smacked into the rock at the back of the hollow and ricocheted with a waspish snarl out into the night.

Peter flattened himself against the side of the depression. From where Assis stood, he could not get a direct shot at him, but a ricocheting bullet might hit him. Assis fired again and this time the bullet glanced off a rock projection a foot from Peter's head and whipped by him so near that the wind of its passage was like the sudden drag of hot fingers across his cheek. He heard Assis laugh, a low, rough sound in the night. Edging forward, he saw that he was now working around the outthrust. If he could come a few feet farther along the ledge he would have a clear view of the inside of the hollow.

Peter bent down and picked up a loose rock. He leaned out and hurled it.

The rock hit the cliff face an inch from Assis's side, glanced against his body and fell into the darkness. Peter threw another rock and heard the dull shock as it smashed into Assis's back. But by the time he had another ready to throw, Assis had prudently drawn back. And now, knowing that the fisherman had his revolver hand free again, Peter kept under cover.

He waited for the next shot. None came. He heard Assis moving on the far side of the overhang. In the hollow, he was perched right on the lip of a great fall. Now and again, the moon, paling a little as the dawn began to stir in the east beyond the distant rim of the crater, escaped from behind the banking clouds and he could see the great gulf at his feet. He tried not to look down, remembering the first time he had ever gone to a mast-head and had seen the ship's deck dwarfed and rolling below him. . . .

He heard Assis shouting to the others and the words came clearly to him. Thanks to Tereza, he knew more Portuguese now. The shotgun! Assis was shouting for the shotgun. He knew what that meant. Both barrels would blast off into this meagre scoop out of the rocks . . . hundreds of pellets slashing back from the hard rock. He would be finished, ripped into a bloody mass. He stood up, swearing to himself.

He had to get away. The black abyss yawned up at him and he looked away quickly, looked up. The rock face went straight up in a three-foot run above the hollow. Then there was a slight overhang and beyond that . . . he could not know. But even the thought of climbing the first few feet was frightening. He reached upwards, worked his fingers into a tiny hold and then felt with his feet for a purchase on the side of the hollow. He found a projection and hauled himself up, his legs and arms trembling in sympathy with the strain that ran from his fingers crooked in the top hold.

He tried not to think about himself or the danger. He was just a thing, a compound of bone, muscle and flesh driven by a will not to be caught, not to be beaten. . . . He had to go on, to live, to get back to Portos Marias. He reached the overhang and got a grip on it. He pulled himself up, his feet swinging clear over the depths below. He lay, panting, pressed into the momentary shelter of a thin horizontal rift in the rocks, his face taking the coolness of the stone. He raised himself cautiously to his feet, and worked along the rift. The rock-face bulged out at him as though it were alive, malevolent, trying to shove him off into the depths below. Blind in the darkness cast by a slow-moving pall of clouds over the moon, he groped his way along.

The narrow foothold came to an end. He reached with his right foot, seeking some fresh hold. But there was nothing. He brought his foot back, and reached out with his right hand, running his fingers along the rock-face. The rock drew back at a sharp angle. He reached round, straining for a fresh hold. His fingertips found the smooth side of a small rock boss. But he could get no firm hold on it.

Then away to his left he heard Assis. He was coming back along the ledge. Assis fired at the rock scoop. Below him Peter heard the shots whine and fret from the cliff and a shower of stones hammered down upon him, shaken loose by the explosions.

HE reached out again, found the rock boss with his hand and then, desperate, let himself go, his other hand swinging free for a second as he hung, his feet dragging clear of the ledge. Then he had both hands on the knob of rock. His knees thudded against the cliff and his feet found a hold. He hauled himself up and, the clouds passing, found himself in a narrow funnel. A piece of rotten rock broke under his hand and fell. Assis heard him.

The shotgun was fired and a blast of pellets whined off the projecting edge of the funnel. His back wedged against one side of the funnel, his feet braced against the other wall, he inched his way upwards. The whole of his right side was exposed as the funnel narrowed and became shallower.

Assis fired again, and a few random pellets bit into Peter's cheek and arm as the main charge whipped into the rock wall below him. He winced with sudden pain, and then, as the echoes died, fought his way upwards again. He dragged himself over the mouth of the funnel at last, and was on a steep, loose slope cluttered with great slabs of rock. His jacket was now so torn that it hindered him. He flung it away, and plunged forward, digging his feet into the soft rubble. Sweat stung his eyes, which were gritty with dust, and the cliff swam before him.

At the head of the slope, under a towering bastion of rock, he slipped. He came down the steep incline of a twenty-foot slab and thudded against a barrier of loose boulders. He grabbed a scraggy growth of bush and hung on. A fall of stones and shale rumbled into the depths below him. He heard Assis shout and there was another shot; but they were both distant.

He crawled again towards the pale grey flank of the rock bastion above him.

It was an agony that seemed endless. His hands were cut and bloody, his nails broken. A fine madness possessed him. He no longer felt any pain when he fell. He swore and talked to himself, but he kept going.

And as he climbed, the night drew back. The tarn below became a dull bronze plaque. But here under the rim of the crest the shadows and darkness clung still, holding out tenaciously against the coming day.

Away on his left he still heard the shouts of Lesset and his men and knew

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*

that they were after him, trying to anticipate his route. His trousers and shirt were torn and ripped and his face was a mess of dust and blood. But he kept on. Inch by inch he clawed and fought his way up.

The sky grew lighter, and the undersides of the clouds took on a dull colour, like the bellies of fish long out of water. The morning was fast coming.

He came finally up over a loose crumbling terrace of old lava stone and found a small patch of thin grass. Beyond it he could see a narrow notch in the crest, and he realized that he was practically at the top. Through the notch lay the way down to Portos Marias. But his feet refused to move for him. He had to rest. He dropped to the grass, and lay panting, stupid with the relief of doing nothing. And, as he lay there, far out at sea the first edge of the sun came dolphin-backed over the horizon and long, sharp morning shadows hardened from the foot of the pinnacles and boulders on the ridge top.

He wanted to stay here, but he knew he must not. And now, the dour, obstinate Cornish spirit helped him. He forced himself to move.

He was on his hands and knees, making the effort to rise, when he heard the rattle of loose gravel and then the soft thud of feet against the grass.

His head came up. Black and bulky, dominating the pale line of the sky above, was Assis. He stood there, his great chest heaving from his running and he held the shotgun at Peter. The twin muzzles were a few inches from his face.

"Senhor . . . Senhor." The words came jerkily from Assis as he fought for his breath. "Senhor . . . too bad. . . ." Even in his despair Peter was aware of a rough sympathy in the voice. Assis shook his head, and then Peter saw one hand slide down the barrel and the other settle snugly about the trigger guard and he heard the safety-catch snap off.

PETER lurched forward clumsily and caught at the barrel. Momentarily the dark muzzles were an inch from his face, then he pushed the shotgun aside, wrenching it from Assis as the man fired. There was a roaring sheet of flame and the vicious sweep of shot-tortured air. They fell together, rolling and struggling. Peter raised his arm and drove with his fist at the contorted boyish face below him. Nails raked across his neck. They smashed and kicked at one another . . . and suddenly they were torn apart and there was the long angry slithering sound of moving gravel and loose stone.

Peter's hand found a bush and he held on. He saw Assis fall away from him, rolling and sliding down a thirty-foot slope of gravel towards the lip of a sheer drop. He heard Assis shout wildly, and then, a few feet from the edge, he saw the man crash into a pile of loose boulders. In a moment Peter thought the whole lot would go over the edge; but the boulders held. He shut his eyes, breathing hard, his head spinning. When he looked again, Assis was beginning to crawl slowly back up the slope.

Peter swayed to his feet. He ploughed upwards through the loose rubble, found grass beneath his feet, and then was plunging across a level piece of ground studded with great boulders. He heard Assis shout behind him. He kept going, the notch against the sky-line ahead of him.

He went through the notch, found the sun suddenly warm on his face and the long slope of the mountainside before him with Portos Marias nestling at its foot. And, as he came out on to the open slope, he heard men shout away to his left, and he saw Lesset and two others working towards him along the broken rim.

In a burst of defiance and triumph, he shouted fiercely back to them, even shaking his fist, for now he was beyond them and there was nothing between him and Portos Marias. He threw himself forward, forcing his body to the pace, sliding and lurching, but always going down . . . down towards Portos Marias.

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RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of these Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated January 23 and in JOHN BULL, dated January 30), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, January 16, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,917 result.)

LAST 1953 XWORD £500 CASH FOR NEW YEAR

£400 FIRST PRIZE—£60 Second Prize—£40 Third Prize

THIS WAY TO WIN First complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two, three* or *four* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

CLUES FOR XWORD 863

Across

1. Way these develop is sometimes due to shortage of essential food
3. Keeping one may well prove costlier than people expected
5. Slippery one may cause young feet to stumble
8. Sculptor sometimes finds he's got to make this of some public figure
10. What kiddy will probably find in his Christmas stocking
12. May appear as cold as ice
13. It's difficult to get this without light of some kind
14. As long as there's plenty of this, people are inclined to think their Christmas party is a success

Down

1. Kiddies sometimes find old one just the thing during Christmas fun
2. Some children grumble if given these as Christmas presents
4. This on suburban line may make city worker late home
6. Casting of one is sometimes the cause of a failure
7. That of a test pilot is never without danger
8. They get a dusting now and again
9. Close co-operation of players makes successful ones possible
11. No wonder postmen detest them

XWORD 861 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 2, Cellar. 4, Looks. 5, Pent. 6, Nip. 10, Coal. 14, Deal. 15, Grade. DOWN: 1, Pose. 3, Aid. 5, Poser. 7, Pal. 8, Mill. 9, Bands. 11, Fare. 12, Boor. 13, Plod.

FIVE £600 SHARERS (with entries differing at one point only from Competitors' Answers above): B. Bonar, 69 Foyle Road, Londonderry; Mrs. E. E. Brimicombe, 32 Ken Road, Bournemouth; Mrs. M. Linton, 93 Crowborough Road, Southend-on-Sea; W. R. Manning, 34 Rathmore Road, Cambridge; J. E. Pinfield, 19 Regis Road, Tettenhall.

Second Prize, Christmas Feasts value £100 shared between 44 competitors (with entries differing at two points). Third Prize Christmas Extras value £50 shared between 160 competitors (with entries differing at three points).

EXAMPLE		6d.
BULLET		
EX.		6d.
B.		
EX.		6d.
B.		
EX.		EXTRA TWO FOR 6d.
B.		
EX.		
B.		

1,917

Closing Postmark MON., JAN. 4

Signed.....

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O.

Address.....

Value .....

No. .....

POST THIS LABEL for BULLETIN 25th BIRTHDAY ISSUE

Post JOHN BULL this label for FREE 25th Birthday issue of *"Bullets" Bulletin* and *Crossword Gazette* dated January 16.

FREE THIS WEEK

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

730

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.
No.		4s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

Puzzle and form strictly copyright **863** Closing Postmark MON., JAN. 4

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Signed.....

Address.....

.....

Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Extra Answers to two Clues = 4 Squares, 1s.; to three Clues = 8 Squares, 2s.; to four Clues = 16 Squares, 4s.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated January 16.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per contest and to entry needing not more than 8s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

ONE WEEK ONLY to post this week's coupon — last week's entry-form may be enclosed.

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Ah! Kensitas- that's Good!

From washing up most husbands shrink.
They say they won't go near the sink.
But oh! they will... if wives but think
Of Kensitas—that's good!

(*Kensitas—the fresher, smoother cigarette*)

It's the ripe mellow tobacco in Kensitas
that gives real smoking pleasure

OUR BELIEF, THE FINEST LEAF... KENSITAS—THAT'S GOOD!